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A LOCK OF HAIR.

BY LOUIS CARROLL PRINDLE.

A slender bunch of dark-brown hair:
Each gleaming thread dearer than gold,
Worth more to me than wealth untold:
Its glossy sheen unblanching by care.

'Tis with a faded ribbon tied,
'Twas cut for me the day she went
From me: by sternest duty sent
To walk in paths—unknown—untrod.

We stood in silence side by side;
Each loving heart by sorrow stirred,
Too full to breathe a cheering word,
For hope with us had well-nigh died.

She gave me then this web of hair:
It has lain upon my heart each night,
This memory of my love, so bright—
So pure, so tender, and so fair.

Oh! how I mourned and missed her love!
And each bright day, to me, was night,
And on my life there seemed a blight
As sad as earth with clouds above.

This lock of hair I treasured dear,
As onward passed each fading day,
And brought to me no cheering ray
Of joy, to light my life so dear.

I kissed and worshiped it instead
Of her, when she was far away,
And as it on my true heart lay—
My starving love upon it fed.

But now, thank God, that time is past,
And she—the loved one—has returned,
And blessed the love that for her yearned,
Yet waited—faithful—to the last.

Without Mercy:

OR,
THREADS OF PURE GOLD.

A TALE OF TWO CONTINENTS.

BY BARTLEY T. CAMPBELL,

AUTHOR OF "IN THE WEB," "OUT IN THE WORLD,"
"LAURA'S PERIL," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER IV.

RUPERT GASPARD.

It was the evening of the fourth day after Hester Corwin had been notified of the coming of Tracy Cuthbert, when the steamer, Lady Franklin, bound from New Orleans to Memphis, landed in the bend immediately in front of Holcombe Hall, and discharged a single passenger.

The three shrill whistles, which on the western rivers always signalize a landing, and the clanging of the great bell on the hurricane-deck which followed, had called old Harold Holcombe to the river edge, and when the dark, handsome stranger leaped on the artificial bank, which guarded the plantation from overflow, he extended his hand to him and said:

"You are Tracy Cuthbert; I am your uncle Harold."

The stranger paused, and half-withdrew his extended hand.

"No, Mr. Holcombe, I am not your nephew."

"Not my nephew—not Tracy?"

"No."

"Then who are you?" coloring scarlet.

"Rupert Gaspard," with a bow, "the heir of Holcombe Hall."

"Indeed?" replied Harold, with some embarrassment. "This is an unexpected pleasure. You must pardon me for my abruptness, Senator Gaspard, but I am expecting a relative from England, and naturally I thought you were he."

"No need of apologies," said Rupert, smiling; "I have grown tired of foreign travel, and so I thought I would come back and stop a few months at the old Hall again."

"You are welcome, senator; very glad indeed to have your society, and I trust you will not find the place so dull."

Rupert thanked him gracefully, and the old man said, glancing at the big trunk which the porter of the Lady Franklin had deposited at the water's edge:

"I will send one of the boys after your baggage, and have it brought to your room."

"Thank you."

The two men turned up the brambly, overgrown path, and Rupert, whose quick eye wandered everywhere, remarked:

"The place has not changed much, Mr. Holcombe. I see you are not in rapport with the spirit of this inventive age."

"No; I don't care for mixing myself in every speculation that offers. All I want is a quiet, comfortable home, and that I have here. I can assure you I'm quite content."

The sigh that followed this declaration seemed to belie his words; but, though Rupert noticed this, he made no mention of it, and they entered the Hall in silence.

Hester Corwin had seen, from her chamber window, the Lady Franklin land—had seen Rupert leap ashore, and when she had seen him approach the house, in company with her uncle, she—believing him of course to be Tracy—turned away to arrange her hair and prepare for the meeting that she expected must follow.

She smoothed back her shining braids, that inclined to ripple over her breast and shoulders; tied a band of blue ribbon at her white throat, and then eyed herself critically in the big mirror.

She was not satisfied with the reflection, although she was positively beautiful in her simple attire, and so she unloosed her hair, untied the blue ribbon, and set about rearranging both.

"Miss Hestah," said Bede, one of the slave girls, putting her head in at the door, "Massa wants to see ye down-stairs, right away."

"I'm going now," replied Hester, all in a flutter of excitement. "But, Bede, stop a



"You here, Margaret Moulton—you here!"

moment; where is the gentleman who came up from the landing a few moments ago?"

"Down dah, in de parlo'. I golly, missah, he's de nice man! Mimma says he's de ole Massa's son what built de place!"

"Built the place! What place?"

"Dis yah place whar we is in at dis moment."

Hester was beginning to see through the matter now.

"Then he is not the gentleman who was expecting from England, after all?"

"Not a bit! Mimma says he's name is Rupert, de same dat we call de towah aftah."

"Rupert Gaspard?"

"Yes, missah; it's some sort uv hard, an' I guess it's dat kind, suh!"

The fluttering died out of Hester's heart, and, bidding Bede to go, she sat down a moment to reflect and collect her thoughts.

After all, this arrival was of slight importance, she imagined, and she was glad it was so, for, to be candid, she did not relish meeting the man she was destined to marry, in this proxy, matter-of-fact way.

At length, without even casting a second glance in the mirror as she passed, Hester swept down the broad stairway, and into the hall.

There she stopped an instant. Unused as she was to society, meeting a person wholly a stranger to her, caused her no little embarrassment, and this she endeavored to conquer now.

She was partially successful, for, when Rupert Gaspard came forward to take her hand, after the ceremony of introduction, he thought he had never met a handsomer or more graceful girl in his life.

"I am very glad to meet you, Miss Corwin," he said.

She thanked him and sat down on a sofa at the further end of the large room, and, for the next hour, listened attentively while her uncle and the young stranger discussed topics connected with the politics and cities of Europe.

Rupert talked well; had a rich, full voice, and when he warmed up into enthusiasm,

as he did when he described the wonders of the Escorial, and the grandeur of the Alhambra, Hester held her breath in admiration.

After supper, old Harold excused himself and went off to attend to some business in the library, leaving the young folks to entertain each other.

They did not get along very rapidly at first. Hester was shy, and only answered in monosyllables, but, after a while, speaking of her school life and affairs at home, she talked with a freedom and ease that astonished even herself, and when early bedtime arrived, and they separated, each felt that they had known each other a very long while indeed.

The next day, in company with Bede, the colored girl, they strolled over the plantation; visited the negro-quarters; gathered moss from the clump of red oaks, and cotton from the opening pods.

Rupert told stories of the old world, and Hester listened attentively, sometimes laughing and sometimes feeling as if she would give a good deal to have a hearty cry over some of the more sentimental.

She was easily impressed, and Rupert, seeing this, delighted in watching the shadows and sunlight come and go at his bidding.

Thus a week passed; October was far advanced, and the plantation hands were preparing for Hallow Eve. The illuminating of the graves in the church-yard—an old country custom—was rigidly observed in these days throughout the parish of St. James, as well as on the Teche and Lafource, and the servants and dependents of Holcombe Hall made it a time of solemnity and display.

The nearest grave-yard was fully a half-mile from the Hall. It was a small affair, hemmed in with a hedge of sweet-brier, and consisting of two flat acres, ridged by a score of graves.

On the day before Hallow Eve, candles of wax and tallow and a few rush-lights were arranged around every grave save one, and that lay off in one corner, as if the sleeping

clay had determined on isolation in death as well as in life.

"Will this grave be neglected?" asked Hester, who, in company with Rupert, stood in the twilight, close to the little mound, watching the slaves as they hurried noiselessly from sepulcher to sepulcher, lighting tapers and arranging wreaths.

"Lor! bless your soul an' body!" replied Bede, who was busiest of all; "no one ever touched dat grave—dat is, no livin' person."

"No living person?" exclaimed Hester.

"What do you mean by that, Bede?"

"Why, ye see, a good many years ago old Massa Kidd, what's dead now, fixed up dat grave mighty putey, wid roses and posies, an' nex' mornin' dar wasn't none of dem dar. Gone clean, suh!"

"Gone! Who dared despoil the grave?" demanded Rupert.

"Ise nebber goin' to tell ye, kase I don't know. But, uncle Pete says he saw a black ghost, dat looked just like Crazy Madge ober dar on Brooks' plantation, do it."

"Who is Madge?" asked Rupert, turning to Hester.

"An unfortunate creature who lives on the edge of the swamp over there, and is reputed crazy."

"And is she so?"

"I don't know; I never saw her but once, and that was when she saved me from drownin' in the swamp, a good many years ago."

"How does she manage to live?"

"By selling charms and medicines to the slaves, and sometimes, I hear, she sends huge piles of herbs to the New Orleans markets."

"Where did she come from?"

"I don't know."

"Nor what induced her to settle here?"

"No."

Rupert looked down at the unadorned grave a moment in silence, and then said:

"There is something remarkable about this Crazy Madge. She was not here in my time; neither was this grave, I'm quite sure of that, or I should have heard of it." Then turning to Bede, he said: "Get a half-dozen

tapers for this grave, and a wreath or two; and here, take this half-dollar."

"Dar's no use puttin' roses dar if dat ghost won't let 'em stay," remarked Bede, fondling the money as if it could not by any possibility be earned by him.

"Never mind the ghost; do what I tell you."

Bede did so, and a half-dozen hands were soon at work, and when Rupert and Hester turned their steps toward Holcombe Hall, the lonely grave could be traced, even in the gloaming, by the lights that flickered about it.

CHAPTER V.

AMONG THE DEAD.

On the very verge of Dark Swamp, where the foliage grew rank, and where the land was oozy, stood the cabin of Crazy Madge. It was an old-looking concern, triangular in shape, and with a slab roof which met at the top and much the same as a Chinese pagoda does. It was constructed of rough-hewn logs, the chinks filled with clay, out of which creeping vines had sprung and run almost over the unique structure. There were two rooms—a kitchen and a bed-room—and both of these were furnished plainly, although comfortably, and every thing was as neat and clean as the most fastidious housekeeper could desire.

All Hallow Eve created no stir in that lonely abode. Madge, a tall, graceful woman still, despite her years, with piercing black eyes and heavy masses of purple-black hair, sprinkled here and there with gray, sat before the blazing log fire and looked dreamily into the red coals.

The crimson glow of the burning wood lit up the chamber with a ruddy light, and painted the shadow of Crazy Madge upon the floor and wall—a large, fantastic, ugly shape.

She was evidently thinking of some unpleasant theme, for, ever and anon, she would grate her teeth together, and her eyes would flash, and her hands open and shut, as if eager to clutch something in their grasp.

Presently the night wind brought to her ears the solemn sound of bells, and she started quickly, as if a blow had been dealt her, and exclaimed:

"Yes, yes! those are the bells in Rupert's tower! What does this mean? Can it be that he is dead?" she paused and bent her ear to listen.

Again the night wind swept by, and far above the noise of the rustling cottonwood she heard distinctly the pealing of the bells.

"Ah! I forgot!" she muttered now. "This is All Souls night, and old Gaspard's ridiculous injunction is being carried out."

She was about to seat herself again, when a sudden thought struck her, and, going to a closet at the foot of the bed, she took therefrom a cloak and hood, and donning these, strode out into the darkness.

The night was warm—almost sultry—the wind due east, and not a star visible, while the rush of the broad Mississippi could be heard for a mile on either side.

"A storm is brewing," muttered Madge, as she stalked onward like a phantom of blackness and despair. "The Mississippi never mutters so loud unless on the eve of a tempest."

On and on she trudged, now climbing over fallen trees, now sinking almost ankle-deep in the boggy land, and anon picking her way through a forest aisle where the shadows were so dark that it was almost an impossibility to find the path.

Finally she emerged from the wood and found herself within two hundred yards of the little grave-yard. The lights at the various graves were still burning—fluttering, spattering and wasting—but the last watcher had left the tombs, to enjoy the home feast, and the scene was not only strangely weird, but very lonesome as well.

Madge took in the whole scene at a glance; then her lips parted and a groan of agony and rage escaped them, as her eyes fell upon the isolated grave which Bede had ornamented.

"This is his work again, is it? This is how he tricks the grave of poor Gertie's rival! He forgets that Madge is still alive, I suppose. But I'll show him; yes, I'll show him!"

She vaulted over the low hedge; ran hastily to the grave, and furiously dashed out the lights and scattered the flowers in every direction. Then, for a moment, she gazed at the ruin she had worked, and catching up the cloak which had fallen from her shoulders, she sped off as fast as her feet could carry her in the direction of Holcombe Hall.

"I'll see him now—this very night," she muttered. "I'll see whether or not our compact can be thus easily broken. Oh, he'll find that I'm not to be trifled with—not to be trifled with. No! no, not by him, at least!"

She stopped talking now. The rapidity of her motion took her breath, and there was not a breath of air stirring. The rain began to patter on the leaves, and make a murmurous sound on the river, and away to the south the distant thunder rolled sullenly.

Then, at short intervals, the bells from Rupert's Tower rung out a discordant peal, that died away in faintest echoes.

At last Madge reached the Hall and glanced up at it. There was a spark of light in the tower, and a ray from a window on the first floor. With these exceptions the house was dark, and save the noise of the bell, silent too.

She seemed thoroughly familiar with the

place, for, turning aside from the path in which she had been strolling, she walked firmly to the window from which the light streamed, and placing her ear close to the sill, listened intently for a minute or two. She tried to see through the close-fitting blind, but in vain, and with a dash of impatience she sent it upward on its pulleys, and stepped into the room.

It was empty. The fire burnt low in the polished grate; the great astral lamp on the center-table cast a soft radiance on every thing, including the marble bust of Psyche in the corner, and the French time-piece, all blue and gold, that shone upon the mantelpiece. The hands of the clock pointed to eleven.

"I do wonder where he can be?" said Madge, surveying her surroundings with a critical look. "Not in bed, for that bell would not be clanging and this lamp burning if he were."

She gathered her dragged skirts about her, and seated herself composedly in one of the great easy-chairs by the table, and closed her eyes as if going to sleep.

Presently the bell stopped tolling; then there was an uneven footstep on the stair; the door opened, and Harold Holcombe stalked into the apartment.

He did not notice the presence of his visitor until he had sunk into a chair directly opposite to her.

With a half-suppressed shriek he leaped to his feet, exclaiming:

"You here, Margaret Moulton—you here?"

The woman arose very deliberately and eyed the cowering creature before her with something akin to triumph.

"Yes, I'm here," she replied. "Does it seem so strange that I should be here?"

He was recovering from the shock her sudden appearance gave him, and he managed to reply:

"No, no—that is, I was not expecting you."

"Indeed!"

"Yes; you promised, if I should faithfully perform my duty to Hester, that you would ask nothing more from me."

"You promised to do more than that, Harold Holcombe; did you not?"

"No."

"Think! I'm in no hurry for a reply."

She dropped back into her seat.

"I can't think of any thing else," he said, desperately.

"Then perhaps I had better remind you," and Madge's hot breath came full in his face, "of a pledge you gave me, ten years ago this very night."

"A pledge?" he repeated.

"Yes, when I came to you after tearing the ornaments from her grave out there. You remember now. I see by that flush in your face that you do."

"Well, what now?" he demanded. "Have I not kept my faith with you?"

"Don't be a fool, man," she replied, fiercely, "and don't take me for one, or you may be sorry. I passed her grave to-night."

"Well?"

"It was decked off in flowers and ablaze with lights."

"I didn't do it!" he answered, his face becoming deathly pale.

She smiled derisively. "And do you expect me to believe you?"

"I do, when I swear it."

"You swore to be true to Gertie, and you destroyed her! What faith can be put in such a man?"

"Be reasonable, Margaret," he said; "the past can not be recalled, but I swear to you, by all my hopes for salvation, that I neither ornamented her grave nor ordered any one else to do so."

She looked him straight in the eye as he spoke, but he quailed not.

"Then who did it?" she asked.

"As I have already said, I don't know."

"Was it the negroes?"

"I can't tell."

There was a momentary silence; then the woman said: "I do believe you; yes, Harold Holcombe, strange as it may sound to you, I believe you. But you must do this."

"Do what?"

"Find out who dared to decorate the grave of that woman, for whom you deserted, yea, murdered poor Gertie."

"Hush-sh!" he exclaimed, tremblingly; "for God's sake don't talk so loud."

"Do you promise?"

"Yes, any thing."

She smiled—a bitter, scornful smile—and, walking to the window, pushed up the sash.

She was about to step out, when she turned suddenly, as if she had just caught a fresh idea, and asked:

"When does Hester become the wife of your heir?"

"As soon as he arrives."

"And when do you expect him?"

"He may be here to-morrow; at furthest in two weeks."

"That was all she said. The next moment she was out in the rain, which now fell heavily, and was fast quenching the few remaining tapers in the lone churchyard."

CHAPTER VI.

IN A STRANGE LAND.

The ship *Merry Lass*, on which Tracy Outhbert sailed out of the Mersey, was a stanch, fast vessel, and in four weeks from the day she dipped out of sight of Liverpool her anchor was dropped at the Balize.

The first glimpse of a strange land strikes most people joyously, for, whatever may have been the pangs which a severance from old ties is sure to bring, a sense of curiosity is quickened, and a desire to rush ashore is generally felt, but, singularly enough, Tracy Outhbert experienced no such sensation.

The panorama was novel to him, 'tis true. Reared as he had been amid chalky cliffs and towering mountains, the wide stretches of low land falling away lower and lower to the line of the horizon, fringed at last by thick set timber, was novel but monotonous.

And even the splendor of the palatial mansions that dot the lower coast, embowered as they are amid groves of orange trees, in which the fruit hang like yellow lumps of gold; and tall, stately magnolias, odorously beautiful, brought forth only a sigh of regret for the green fields and good wife he had left behind.

Ten hours of wearily following the windings of the Mississippi, and then that oddest of American cities, New Orleans, was reached.

Tracy stood looking at the city from the quarter-deck. A fellow-passenger at his elbow nudged him familiarly as the *Merry Lass* touched the levee at the foot of Girod street, and remarked:

"I say: what caused the city to sink below the river?"

"I can't say, I'm sure," replied Tracy.

"The blasted place looks as if it was trying to crawl clean out of sight," ventured the other, and saying this, he darted off to prevent a cabman from carrying away his baggage.

Tracy found, on inquiry, that the steamer *Hazel Dell* would leave at five o'clock for Vicksburg, and on this he engaged passage for Big Briar Bend, as the landing in front of Holcombe Hall was called.

Having four hours in which to wait, he occupied the time in roaming through the city. First he visited the old Mint, then the French Market, where the population of the world is represented by the worst specimens of each type; and, finally, he sauntered down Esplanade street. The weather, notwithstanding the month was November, was very warm, and under the trees that line this beautiful thoroughfare, Tracy seated himself on a rustic seat, the ancient municipality having in a munificent mood, placed there, and began to fan himself with the broad felt hat he had purchased in London.

He had not been long seated when a wrinkled old negress, dressed in a garb of many vivid colors, and whose head was surmounted with an odd-looking hat of black velvet, trimmed with yellow ribbons and a very bright and very big scarlet plume, hobbled up to him, and, depositing the basket she had been carrying on her arm at Tracy's feet, said, with an accent decidedly French: "Monsieur is a stranger in de city, eh?"

Having no desire to converse with this exceedingly odd creature, he merely said, in answer: "Yes."

"Ah, I do so much. You Anglaise man. Come to New Orleans to-day on ship."

"Yes," with some surprise; "but how came you to know that?"

"Ah! my good friend, queen Hortense know eb'rying in de city. I see you get off ship."

"Indeed!"

"But, my good friend, Hortense know if she nobler seen de ship. She know what you tink about now; she can tell what happen to-morrow as well as what happen to-day."

Tracy smiled incredulously, and remarked: "Then you are a fortune-teller?"

"Yes, zat what I am," straightening herself up and looking as important as possible. "Do you wish to hear your future?"

"No, not particularly; I'm quite willing to let the future develop itself."

"You don't believe me, monsieur. You zink me a imposture?"

"You're mistaken," answered Tracy, with a yawn; "I have not troubled myself to foot up an estimate of your character. I presume, however, that you claim by the use of cards to divine the future. Whether you can do so, truly, or whether your pretensions are only raised to gull the weak, is no matter of mine. So you will pardon my abruptness, when I say, as I do now, good-bye."

He was about to turn away, when she clutched him by the arm, and said, in a slightly changed voice:

"I'm no juggler, Tracy Outhbert!"

He started. "You know me?"

"Ay, well! I'm the Voodoo Queen; I know every thing. You are just from England; you are going to Holcombe Hall to wed an heiress—a beautiful, pure, good girl; be true and kind to her, and God will be even so to you."

She picked up her basket as she finished, and hurried down the street, disappearing among the crowd at the first corner, leaving Tracy half-stunned and wholly lost in amazement.

His first impulse was to follow her, and force her to reveal to him from what source she had gained her information; but on second thought, he said:

"Perhaps she learned this from some of my fellow-passengers; and as to my marrying an heiress, that is such a palpable mistake, to call it by no other name, that it settles all doubts as to her true character—a mere charlatan—catchpenny."

He tried to dismiss the matter with this, but he could not refrain from dwelling upon the little episode long after the *Hazel Dell* had pushed out from the foot of Canal street; and it was not until the Red Church—twenty-five miles from the city—had been reached that he left the guards, and tried to sleep the miles away.

In the early gray of the following morning Tracy found himself on the shore in Big Briar Bend. He glanced around carelessly, and his eye alighted on a huddle of huts not far from where he stood. Dragging his trunk to the nearest, he rapped for admittance.

"Who's dar?" demanded a voice from the interior.

"Tis I," replied Tracy.

"An' who, in de Lord's name, am you?"

"I'm Mr. Outhbert, from England."

The door was opened now, and a large woolly head protruded. "How did ye git heah, honey?"

"I came up from New Orleans on the *Hazel Dell*."

"Yes, indeedy mi, oh! hi!" Then a pause. "An' who did yer want ter see, boss?"

"Mr. Holcombe," answered Tracy, with some show of dignity in his voice; "is not this his estate?"

"No, sah, dis amn't his State. Lo'd bress ye, dis am de State of Louisiana. No, sah, I golly; Massa Holcombe rich, mighty rich, but dis State amn't no potato-patch, I kin tell ye, chile."

Tracy saw at once that his words had been misconstrued, so he hastened to add:

"I meant, does not this place belong to Mr. Holcombe?"

"Yes, sah!" with considerable emphasis; "all uv it; eb'ry bit, from de timber-land clear back to de swamp."

"Where is the family residence?"

"You goin' up dah?"

"Yes."

"Den I'll show you, wid de greatest uv pleasah."

The colored individual, who proved to be an old field-hand named Bijah—which was undoubtedly an abbreviation of the Biblical Obediah—ventured forth now, and walked slowly, and with a great deal of gravity, to an opening in the cottonwood, a few rods south of the cabin, from whence an uninterrupted view of Holcombe Hall could be had.

"Does you see dat big house up dah?" pointing with his index finger.

"Yes; distinctly."

"De house wid de smoke curlin' up from de kitchen part—eh?"

"Yes, yes!" Tracy was becoming impatient.

"Wid de bell-house onto it?" persisted Bijah.

"I have said I see it very plainly."

"Dat am de place, honey. You can bet on ole Bijah's word eb'ry time. When he says dat is de place, he means it. Yes, sah, he does indeedy," with a great show of candor.

"Then you will be kind enough to look after my baggage. Good-morning!"

The young man, now out of all patience with his dusky informant, darted away across the fields and into the path that led up to the Hall.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 114.)

Hercules, or, Hunchback:

The Fire-Fiends of Chicago.

A REVELATION OF THE GREAT CONFLAGRATION.

BY A. P. MORRIS, JR.

AUTHOR OF "FLAMING TALISMAN," "HOODWINKED," "BLACK CRESCENT," "BLACK HAND," ETC.

CHAPTER XVI.

"ARE YOU AFRAID TO DIE?"

THE crone, the Spaniard and the maniac entered a comfortable apartment in the second story of the house, and Jose's teeth glistened behind his half-parted lips, as he turned to the prisoner, with:

"Here we are, my Satanella."

"All right," she replied, carelessly, as she advanced, looking about her.

"It is here you will see your lover."

"All right," again.

But she perceived that they were the sole occupants of the room; and a feeling of distrust immediately preyed upon her, for she wheeled abruptly, and said:

"I don't see him. There is no one here. You have deceived me."

"Oh, no; rest easy. He will come soon enough—Lala!" the last to the Indian woman.

Their glances met; with quick, noiseless steps, they glided out, while Hermoine was gazing at a picture on the wall.

They locked the door upon their captive, and descended the stairs.

"The window," interrogated Jose; "is it safe?"

"Safe enough—nailed till it is half iron."

"Did you see the papers she carried?"

"Yes. When she came in, she had them; when we left her, they were gone."

"Ha! yes; I remember, as we went out of the room, I missed them. They are in her bosom, perhaps. I must have those papers, Lala."

"They are not in her bosom, nor on her person at all," croaked the woman.

"How do you know that?" anxiously.

"No matter; but I'll swear it."

"Strange: what can she have done with them, I wonder?" this as they entered the parlor.

"Listen them, no doubt."

"Stay!" he interrupted. "My man, Miguel, is outside. The fellow is cursing me roundly by this time. Let me call him."

He passed out to the front door, and called Miguel by name—in vain, of course. The Indian woman still kept close beside him.

The pair had no sooner left the doorway, than Miguel, determined to make his presence known, came from behind the curtains of the alcove.

But he halted suddenly. Jack Willis confronted him, with revolver at a level; and the detective's eye danced threateningly as he hissed:

"Right about, friend Miguel—jump! Go hide yourself again. Mind—I'm a gun-powder almanac, and I'll put cold weather into your life quicker than frost! Hear me?—right about!"

Miguel looked at the dark muzzle of the weapon, surveyed the diminutive humanity in his path, then, grinding an imprecation between his tobacco-stained teeth, he slunk back to his concealment.

Jose and the crone returned after a few moments.

"What's all that blood?" demanded she, now seeming to notice, for the first, the Spaniard's condition.

"A bullet from the pistol of an enemy," explained Jose. "Curse him!—he was quick on the trigger, and treacherous as he was quick. Here—look."

When he had bared his breast, she examined the torn flesh, frowning as she bent her glittering eyes upon the wound.

"Bad—bad—bad," she uttered, slowly, as the blood began to flow afresh.

"How! you don't mean that I am in danger?" and a shivering sensation crept over him.

"Yes."

"No."

"But I say yes. Do you know more than I, when medicine has been my study, and the healing of flesh my practice? You must go to bed—"

"Impossible—"

"And remain quiet," continued the woman, without noticing his interruption, and proceeding to bathe the wound with water from a pitcher on a near table.

"Do you think I will die, Lala?" stammered Jose.

"Maybe not. Come—to bed. The sooner, the better; and I'll dress it for you."

"To bed? No! I can not. Lala, I am playing a game in which human wits are the cards. To lose time, now, would be to defeat myself."

"Hark!" broke in the crone, bending to a listening attitude.

The savage snarl of a dog was what called forth her exclamation.

"It is your pet," said Jose.

"And when he growls, there is cause for it," whispered she.

"Pah! no matter. Perhaps some one, racing through the alley, has angered him. This wound—I must not go to bed, Lala; I have too much work to do. Is there nothing to heal it at once—for a time—afterward, I can lie upon my back for a year, if need be."

The Indian woman studied him keenly, and, for a long while, was silent.

"Are you afraid to die?" she asked, at length.

"Die!" Jose started. "What mean you?"

"This! I can cure you for twenty-four hours—make you strong as ever. But, when that twenty-four hours rolls around, I'll twiddle strangely on the last, 'it may be that all the arts old Lala knows will not save you! Worse flame will be in the hurt; there will be great danger. Will you try?"

Jose Moreno was very pale as he weighed

the words of the Indian woman. Was he brave enough to test the ordeal? could he accomplish in twenty-four hours the purposes he had in view? and if accomplished, what were his chances of deriving benefit from the labor of his plans?

"Cure me at once!" he exclaimed, after a moment's thought. "You'll find me brave enough. And if I die, what matter after all?—for if I am unsuccessful, I do not care to live."

Simultaneous with the utterance of this resolution, there was a low groan in the direction of the alcove.

Miguel—ruffian as he was—idolized Jose Moreno, his captain. When he heard the reckless declaration, he felt miserable, and all the caution he could muster would not check the groan which rose to his lips; yet, while his feelings were sincere, he cursed himself for his weakness.

In a second's flight, Jose sprang forward and tore the curtains aside.

He grasped his follower by the throat, and dragged him to his knees ere he discovered who the eavesdropper was.

"Scoundrel!" he cried.

"Hold, captain!—I don't quarrel with you," spat the bully.

"Miguel!"—in astonishment, "you here! How is this?"

"The devil!" snorted Miguel, rising to his feet, and shaking himself. "I am cramped to death, then—broken in pieces! Would you tear my head off with that grip of yours?"

"How came you here?" questioned his captain.

"I'll answer that another time. Look, now: there's another spy in this room."

"What mean you?"

And Jack Willis set his teeth hard, and muttered, inwardly:

"The cat's out, and I'm in! Here's a mess! Coffee!"

"There!" growled Miguel, pointing to the window curtains.

Jose understood, for he turned around and stepped toward the place indicated. Bang! went the ambushed revolver.

The Spaniard reeled backward, his face burnt by the explosion, but not seriously hurt.

Miguel vented an angry oath. He drew a pistol, and fired at that portion of the curtain whence had come the shot at his captain.

But Willis emerged from the other side, unharmed. Like a rocket, he darted out, uttering a defiant yell, and discharging another barrel at the bulky Spaniard, who was rushing upon him.

The bullet whistled spitefully close to Miguel's ear; and then he paused short, and stared—upon a square opening in the floor, down which the detective had vanished.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE SUMMONS THAT STAYED A CRIME.

WHEN Eward Greville snatched the boy from Jose's arms, after wounding the latter in the tunnel, he fled with all possible speed from the scene of the encounter.

And as he went, casting uneasy glances behind him, a devilish expression settled in his face.

Jose Moreno had said that this child was the last survivor of the family of Nelson Greville, and heir by law. It will be remembered that, in a former chapter, Jose charged Eward Greville with the murder of Nelson Greville and his family, for two objects: first, in keeping with the mysterious pledge of the bullet scar; second, that he and Hermoine might gain possession of the moneys and estates coming to them in case of the decease of Mortimer Gascon, who was the only remaining member—known—at the beginning of our narrative, to interfere with their inheritance.

Now, as he hurried on, clutching the child in a fierce hold, and silencing it by horrible threats, he realized that his foul work in the past had not been thoroughly done; for here was an object, sprung up unexpectedly in his way, which might ruin him, and eventually drag his crime-stained soul into the black pit of retributive justice.

He was a man bold as he was hardened. It was not, then, a look of fear which overspread his features, at the uprise of so dreaded an obstacle; but, rather, one expressing a determination to defy the fate which threatened to shake his security.

He could hear the thunderous crash of falling buildings; the hoarse roar of spouting flames, crackling of timbers, shrieks of whistles, clang of bells, and cries of affrighted people in his rear; the howling gale swept about him, and (long since bare-headed) fanned the hair back from his white, cold forehead.

All around was lighted up, as if it were sunrise in a realm of vortexed nature, where the laws of earth convulsed beneath the onset of a myriad demons, let loose from their chained fury, to engulf mankind in misery.

Alison has awed us with his description of the burning of Moscow—where, as in the fearful fall of Chicago, the sweep of an autumn gale made hideous the progress of the wrathful element—the explosion of oils and gases, soaring balloons of flame, burning towers, flying brands, raining sparks, billows of smoke, all vomiting, spitting, roaring, hissing, seething, crashing in the vast, hell-like sea of fire; and two centuries ago, the dark angel laid a great Metropolis, beyond the Atlantic, wide and waste in ashes—more merciless than the havoc of

"Where can he be?" cried Jose, more to himself.

"In one of the boxes," ventured Miguel. "Bah! a man in a candle-box? You're a fool!"

The woman said nothing. She was superstitious by nature, and the disappearance of the man who, she knew, could not escape from the cellar in so short a time by ordinary means, led her to believe the occurrence wrought by spiritual agency.

She motioned them to assist her in re-adjusting the trap, and the two men were as silent as she, in actual amazement, while they lent a hand.

Suddenly Jose Moreno felt a dizziness in the head, and staggered, clutching spasmodically at the thin air. He would have fallen but for the timely support of his follower.

"Ha!" cried the woman, recalled to a sense of his condition, "he is weak; steady him. Bring him along up stairs. Quickly, now."

Miguel bore his captain from the parlor to a bed in the second story; and, for the time, Jack Willis was forgotten.

"Grandmother, is that you?" inquired a low voice from the adjoining room.

"Yes, it is I," she replied, going to a door between. "Quiet yourself. How do you feel now, boy?"

"Better."

"Who is it?" asked Jose, half rising to his elbow on the bed.

"Trix."

"Ah! he had slipped my memory. You said he was hurt in trying to avenge his mother?"

"There, there—you talk too much. Peace."

"Doctor him fast, old woman, or there will be a funeral, as I live!" put in Miguel, growlingly, for he saw that Jose was about to faint.

She applied restoratives; and when the wounded man was somewhat strengthened, she left him with his follower, and retired to a sort of closet near the foot of the couch.

A fluid lamp was ignited beneath a rusty pan, and a number of liquids which she poured in soon began to steam. Then, when the mixture had reached a boil, she took various herbs from their hooks on the side-shelfing, and added these to the decoction.

With a monstrous ladle she stirred the mass around, humming to herself a low, weird strain that was like the murmur of a queer string instrument.

Jose could see everything that passed, and he lay there watching her intently.

Miguel cast suspicious glances at the pan, and scowled in silence. He detested medicine, and its manufacture in this instance seemed to him like the creation of poison.

While working steadily away, the Indian doctress was called by the occupant of the next room.

"Grandmother—the cordial. I am weakening."

"Stir this," said she to Miguel, indicating the bubbling, pasty liquid.

Only the emergency of the case overcame his repugnance for the task; and even then it was not without much hesitation that he advanced and did as she requested.

"The 'curst thing will shoot off, and I shall be killed!" he muttered, using the ladle with extreme caution, and on the alert to jump at the least sign of combustion. "It is the wine of the devil, and the captain's soul is lost when he drinks it—ha—ha!"

A slight spitter in the steaming mass made his nerves twitch, and he stood off at arm's length, continuing to mutter uneasily.

"Trix!" called Jose, inquiringly.

"I am here—and near dead for what I have done. That is you, Captain Moreno?"

"Yes; and I am half-killed myself. What ails you, boy?"

"Aiming at the life of him who sent my mother to her grave, I not only failed, but fared badly for my pains."

"How happened it?"

"Peace!" interposed the woman. "Neither of you have strength to spare in talking. Be still, I say."

But Trix explained. He told how he had assaulted the Hunchback on the roof, and amid the glare and smoke and heat of the raging fire; he minutely detailed all that transpired, even to his own miraculous escape from the burning building, and concluded by expressing a belief that Hercules had perished in the flames.

"Not so," said Jose, at the last. "Hercules is still alive, for we have seen him within the house."

"We have!" indomitable Miguel, with a grunt, as he thought of his narrow escape from the dreaded enemy.

But, unseen by Jose or Miguel, there was a strange scene enacting in the room where lay the suffering Indian boy.

The crone had grasped him by the arm, half-jerking him to a sitting posture, and her small, dark orbs were snapping in excitement, as she cried:

"What?—what's that you say? Hercules hung by one hand from the roof, and the weight of Zane upon him—both in mid-air—death for each in the fall?"

"It was so. But I cared not; I sought vengeance, and though a hundred perished with him, it was the same to me so long as he died!"

"Boy, you are mad!"

"No, I am not—"

"But I say you are!—you are mad! Zane is your own sister!"

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 110.)

The Red Mazeppa:

OR,
THE MADMAN OF THE PLAINS.

A STRANGE STORY OF THE TEXAN FRONTIER!
[THE RIGHT OF DRAMATIZATION RESERVED.]

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN,
AUTHOR OF "OVERLAND KIT," "WOLF DEMON," "ACE OF SPADES," "WITCHES OF NEW YORK," ETC.

CHAPTER XLII.
A RUNNING FIGHT.

THE shrill war-whoop of the Comanches rung like a knell of doom upon the ears of the astonished Mexicans. Too late they guessed the snare that the wily Indian chief had laid for them.

The pretended flight was but a ruse to draw the Mexicans forth from the hacienda. Vainly the astonished whites essayed to gain the doorway and bar out the foe, but the savage chiefs were too quick for them, and the struggling mass of humans, red and white, closed in together in deadly conflict, just by the doorway.

Outnumbered ten to one, the Mexicans

fell before the keen lance-point and the long scaling-knife.

The soldiers, mounted, made a bold dash for the open prairie, but a line of mounted Indians, stationed beyond in a circle on the plain, hemmed them in.

With the desperation born of despair, the Mexicans charged fiercely upon the Indian line.

The shrill reports of the carbines rung out clear on the air. Fired in haste, and with little regard for aim, the red warriors did not suffer much from the discharge. And then came the closing in of the opposing forces. The Mexicans' sabers but idly parried the thrust of the Indian lance. One by one the Mexican dragoons went down in the bloody struggle.

The two Americans had remained a little apart from the rest, and the first note of the savage war-whoop warned them that a desperate struggle for life was at hand.

A single glance of agony the Mustang gave toward the doomed hacienda, and his hand nervously clutched the bridle rein of the brown mare.

Crockett guessed the thought.

"Are you mad, Gil?" he cried. "They're a hundred to one against us. Let's put; we can help the gal better alive than dead!"

"Oh, heavens! this is fearful!" the Mustang cried, in agony.

"Ride for life!" Crockett exclaimed.

The Mexican soldiers had just charged onward, and the two Americans followed in their rear.

"Save your fire, Gil!" cried Crockett, drawing his pistols and raising the hammers, guiding the Mustang by the pressure of his knees solely.

The hasty volley fired by the bewildered and panic-stricken soldiers called forth the caution.

And when the Indians and soldiers closed in together, the two Americans, bearing to the left, avoided the rush of the foe.

At first it seemed as if the two were about to escape, almost without a struggle, for only six or eight red chiefs were between them and the open prairie, and they were scattered over the plain.

A yell of warning went up from a red throat, as one of the chiefs beheld the two riding so steadily onward.

Thus warned, a dozen or so of the Comanches detached themselves from the struggling throng where the overpowered dragoons were being butchered and spurred onward in chase of the fugitives.

The position of the Americans was a desperate one; before them were six or eight well-mounted warriors, who had not yet reddened their weapons in white blood, and who pointed for the slaughter behind them a host of yelling demons, their appetites whetted for more blood.

At a single glance the two took in the situation.

"We kin outrun 'em, I think," Crockett said, as they rode rapidly onward; "if we kin only break through that red coral of red serpents, we're good for a dozen fights yet."

Then the mounted chiefs, as if actuated by a common impulse, drew bow to shoulder and the feathered shafts whistled past the ears of the fugitives.

"Conspiration's tail!" growled Crockett, in disgust; "one on them derned skunks has barked the tip of my ear!"

The shave had been a close one, for the ear of the borderer was bleeding from the contact of the Indian shaft.

"Jerusalem! my head feels like a beehive!" Crockett exclaimed.

"A mile is as good as a mile, Davy," cried the Mustang, his spirits rising as the danger came nearer and nearer. "We must be within range; shall we give it to 'em?"

The Mustang also rode, pistols in hand. "Wait a minute; they'll go for us quick now; then pop 'em," Crockett said.

The chiefs in front, who barred the fugitives' way to freedom, with lance in hand and wild cries, came charging down upon the whites at the full speed of their fiery little mustangs.

"Now give 'em blazes!" cried Crockett, between his clenched teeth.

"Crack! crack!"

Two pistol-shots rung out on the air, and two of the foremost Comanche warriors went down on the greensward of the prairie, stricken unto death.

"Hooryay!" yelled Crockett, in glee, as he noted the fatal effects of the pistol-shots.

A yell of rage and defiance burst from the throats of the red warriors.

The Americans had selected the two chiefs who formed the center of the half-circle. Their fall left an open space unguarded for the escape of the whites. Perceiving this, the Indians who formed the ends of the semicircle changed their course, in order to close up the gap and intercept the fugitives.

"That big cuss on the 'clay-bank' hoss is in range," Crockett said, grimly; "guess his time's come."

Again the sharp pistol-crack rung on the air, but the result was not as the scout had anticipated, for the chief's quick eyes had perceived the intention of the white, and he had endeavored to conceal himself behind the body of his Mustang. The device was put into execution quick enough to save his life possibly, but not his person, for Crockett's ball passed through his shoulder, and he rolled from his steed to the prairie, disabled from all further action in the conflict.

Another howl of rage burst from the lips of the Indians.

The fall of the chief, though it added fresh fuel to their desire for vengeance upon the daring and desperate foe, yet made them less reckless in their attack.

The chiefs who were bearing down on the side of the Mustang swerved their horses to the right and galloped out of pistol range. The single chief still left on Crockett's side followed the example of his brethren.

"We've beat 'em!" cried Crockett, in triumph; "wake snakes and come at me!"

No obstacle now intervened between the fugitives and the broad prairie, which promised safety, but in their rear were twenty or more well-mounted Comanche warriors, burning with rage and thirsting to revenge the blood of their fallen comrades stricken down even at the very moment of victory.

An anxious glance the Mustang cast behind him at the maddened foe, and then he looked at the wily little Mustang ridden by the borderer. Crockett noticed the look.

"I think he'll stand it," Crockett said, dubiously; "he's a tough little cuss."

"They are well mounted," Gilbert said, with another earnest look behind.

"The little beast is a-doin' all he knows how, Gil. Are they gaining on us?"

"Yes."

"That's ugly."

"I have a plan," the Mustang said,

suddenly. "Give me your rifle. I'll hold these devils at bay for a few moments while you push on. My nag is fresh and can easily outrun any Mustang owned in the Comanche nation."

"I hate to run, but it's got to be did," Crockett remarked, as he unsling his rifle and handed it to the Mustang.

"If the red-skins suffer as much from all running foes as they have from you, they are to be pitied."

Then the Mustang halted his horse and half-turned in the saddle. He unsling his own rifle and held it suspended by the sling from his arm.

The foe came dashing onward, but as they beheld the single man coolly confronting them, they slackened their pace; they suspected a trap.

The Mustang waited calmly until the Indians slowly rode into range; then, like a flash, the rifle leaped to his shoulder and the bright flames that flared forth on the night told that the leaden missile had been sped.

A howl of rage came from the Indians as a brawny chief threw up his arms and tumbled from his Mustang, shot through the lungs.

Prudence forgotten, the Indians dashed onward, fierce for vengeance.

Again the long rifle spoke, and again a savage went down with a groan of anguish. Then the Mustang galloped on and rejoined Crockett, loading as he rode.

Three times did the Mustang turn, and three times did Crockett gain ground, until, at last, in despair, the Comanches gave up the chase, baffled, cursing the skill of the whites; then they took the backward trail.

Onward for Dhanis rode the two fugitives; soon they passed the adobe walls and told the fearful story of the capture of Bandera's hacienda, and the massacre of the Mexican troops.

CHAPTER XLII.

THE STRANGE ALLIANCE.

WITH white faces and bated breath, the citizens listened to the fearful story.

"All slain, say you, senor?" asked the officer left in command of the garrison, a stripling ensign, who looked pale and trembled as he thought of the responsibility now thrust upon his shoulders.

"It is barely possible that some few may have escaped," the Mustang answered; "but it is doubtful; the attack was so sudden and the Indians in such overpowering numbers, that your soldiers had scant time to prepare to meet the attack, and little chance to break through the lines of the foe. My friend and I escaped by a miracle."

"Do you think that the savages meditate an attack upon us here?" the officer asked.

"Beyond a doubt," Gilbert replied, quickly.

"But I should not think that they would dare to face the guns of the fort," the ensign said, growing more and more nervous.

"I reckon that that's a thousand red Injuns 'twixt my eye and Bandera's ranche, an' they mean mischief," Crockett said, seriously. "That's a rally 'nough of 'em fur to swallow us, let alone givin' us a fair fight."

"Would it not be best to abandon the town and retreat down the river?" the Mexican said.

A scream of remonstrance went up from the surrounding people at the bare thought of leaving their homes and household gods to the savage mercy of the fierce Comanche warriors.

"Wal, I should say, let the women an' childrens stay, an' the he-folks stay an' fight it out," the borderer said, slowly.

A man, breathless with haste, dismounted from a smoking Mustang and cast himself into the throng.

"Senor Capitan!" he cried, addressing the officer, "the Indians—the Comanches are below—advancing up the river; they come against Dhanis!"

A cry of astonishment broke from the crowd. The truth was plain; Dhanis was surrounded by the foe.

A few among the crowd recognized the speaker. It was the outcast son of Bandera, Luis. He had not yet heard the terrible story of the attack upon his father's hacienda.

A girl, wrapped in a dark mantle, came through the crowd and touched the young man on the arm. He turned, and she whispered a word in his ear. A joyful exclamation came from his lips, and then both he and the girl disappeared in the crowd.

"We must prepare to defend ourselves!" cried the Mexican officer, in great agitation. "It is useless to attempt to hold the town. We must all take refuge in the fort."

"But our goods—our houses?" cried the crowd, in chorus.

"It is our only chance for life," the officer replied. "I shall close the gates of the fort in half an hour. Let those who will remain without."

And the ensign instantly betook himself to the fort, followed by the soldiers who had mingled with the throng.

Crockett and the Mustang remained motionless, leaning upon their rifles.

"Wal, what do you think?" Crockett asked.

"Better take to the prairie; if we are shut up in the fort, we can do nothing for the rescue of my poor girl," the Mustang replied.

"She's putty sure to be in the Injuns' hands," Crockett said, thoughtfully.

"Yes," and the stout-hearted Mustang growled aloud at the thought. "They will spare her life; spare her to become the wife and slave of some brawny Indian chieftain. I would far rather see her dead on the prairie, brained by a Comanche tomahawk, than know that she dwelt a degraded slave in the smoke of an Indian wigwam."

"Sartin; that's my pinion. I've got an idee! Spose we rouse the lower towns? This raid ought to rouse the Greasers up fur vengeance ef they've got any blood in their veins."

"The suggestion is a good one."

"And I will aid you to carry it out," said a deep voice at their elbows. They turned and beheld the strange being who called himself the Madman of the Plains.

"Follow me, and we will counsel together."

With awe in their faces, the two followed the maniac.

With a stealthy, noiseless step, the strange being led the way to the outskirts of the town.

The streets were filled with trembling Mexicans, hurrying their families toward the fort.

On the little plain, just beyond the town by the river's bank, stood a sturdy gray steed fastened by its lariats to a stunted bush. It was the charger of the madman.

"Now we will counsel together," said the maniac, in his strange, deep voice.

The two Americans, in following their strange guide, had not forgotten their horses, and the three men and the three steeds stood together by the river's bank.

"I know all the events of the night," the madman said, in solemn tones. "I knew that the blow would fall when the Mexican moon rose full in the sky. I warned them, but it was fated that the Comanche should ride his wild Mustang amid the ruins of Bandera. It is fated, too, that Dhanis shall fall. What can a handful of men do against a host of red wolves? Wise are ye that you choose the open prairie rather than the walled fort. So shall ye be saved while the others perish. It is their doom; I can not save them from it," and the wanderer shook his head sadly.

"But now for action," and the strange being glared around him for a moment, pushed the tangled masses of hair back from his forehead, then spoke.

"You would seek assistance from the towns below to rescue your promised bride? Nay, do not start—I know your secret; couched was I, like the wild deer, in the bushes when the maiden confessed her love for thee. I saw the assassins steal in upon thee, and watched them fall and die; then saw him, the author of all evil, approach and question his dying instrument. His time will soon come—in the Indian wigwam, where the Concho cuts the plain—but not by the hand of a red-skinned warrior, but one as white as himself. Then, oh, Heaven! set me free, too!" With uplifted hands the Madman addressed the skies.

"His mind is wandering," whispered Gilbert in the ear of the borderer.

"No!" cried the maniac, suddenly; his quick hearing had caught the whispered words. "Not wandering, but coming home at last! Listen: do not go to the lower towns for assistance to win back the maid you love, from the ruthless red-man's power. The supine Mexicans will not venture life and limb for thee. The worst Comanche is a spell to fill with terror the hearts of all the dwellers from the Seg's stream even to the gates of Durango. You and I and this stout-hearted hunter will follow on the trail of the victorious savage, when, drunk with success, laden with rich spoils, reckless with easy triumph, he wends back his steps to his prairie home, where the Twin Mountains look down upon the head-waters of the Concho. A thousand strong the red warriors retreat, but the band breaks up as it enters the prairie wilderness; each chief takes his share of the spoil and departs for his own village. We will follow the band that bears Bandera and his daughter prisoners."

"But, how can we tell to which chief they will fall?" asked Gilbert.

"To-morrow question the ruined walls of Dhanis; ask the river, red with blood from the scalped bodies floating down its stream, the name of the author of the horrid work; along the line of the whole frontier ask which Indian chief has the bloodiest record; go into the desert, question the Apache or Navajo warrior the name of the great red king, whose bloody hand has left its mark from the great Staked Plain to the Mexican walls. With one voice all will answer, the 'White Mustang!'"

"The Comanche chief!"

"More than chief; king!" answered the Madman, wildly. "A human wolf, with all the cunning of the fox, all the fierceness of the panther. He will carry back Bandera's daughter for his wife, but ere he weds the Mexican flower, another bride will glide into his wigwam and clasp him with cold arms that shall hold him till the last great trumpet is sounded, and saint and sinner alike rise to meet their Judge."

During the wild speech of the Madman the Americans had reflected. They saw at once how excellent was the advice, and how easy it would be to follow on the track of the retreating Indians, intoxicated with victory and laden down with plunder.

"But we ain't acquainted with the Comanche region," Crockett said, slowly, being about the only objection that he could think of.

"I am," replied the Madman, quickly. "I have walked within the Indian country till even the dogs know my footfall and bark not at me. I know the village of the White Mustang as the stars know the earth. Your horse is fleet, young stranger, so is mine; and for you the Indian coral holds many a good Mustang. Decide! Will you go?"

The Comanches will soon be here; the White Mustang is an eagle who strikes quickly; Bandera has felt his talons; Dhanis will soon be shadowed by his wings."

"Go on; we'll follow," the Mustang said.

"Through thick an' thin," Crockett added.

"Come, then; to horse, and across the river; we must couch in the bushes while Dhanis blazes a beacon fire to call the red wolves in."

A minute more and the three were in the saddle, fording the river.

And Dhanis waited in breathless anxiety for the dreaded Comanche warriors.

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE SURPRISE.

DESPERATE was the struggle at the gate of the hacienda, but the Mexicans, taken by surprise, could offer but a faint resistance.

Bandera hardly had time to draw his saber when a dozen brawny chiefs sprang upon him and bore him over to the ground, despite his desperate efforts to shake off his assailants.

It was evidently the purpose of the Indians to make the aged Mexican a prisoner, for the chiefs struck no blows at him, though naked weapons were gleaming in their hands.

One by one the Mexicans went down, either killed outright, badly wounded, or else prisoners to the merciless foe.

The Indians poured into the hacienda, and the shrieks of the hapless Mexican maids resounded on the air. No violence was offered them except that their hands were bound. They were reserved for a fate far worse than death—a life of torture in the wigwams of the Comanches.

The prisoners secured, the work of plunder went on. The Indians ransacked the hacienda; then the torch was applied, and soon all within the house that could burn was in flames.

The adobe walls, though, defied the malice of the Indians.

Giralda had been treated differently from the rest of the captives. Her hands were unbound and a special guard seemed assigned to her. Her heart grew sick within her as she noticed the respect with which she was treated. She had lived too long on the frontier not to guess the reason; she had

already been selected as the wife of some great chief.

Bandera and his daughter had been placed together. The Indians who guarded them were headed by the chief known as Ah-hu-la.

When the work of destruction was completed, Ah-hu-la pointed, with a grim smile, at the smoking ruins.

"Wigwam gone—prairie all Indian now. White Mustang, great chief, long time said great stone-house burn some moon," the Indian said, proudly.

"Where is the chief?" asked Bandera, who had not noticed among the Comanches any chief who corresponded to the description of the White Mustang.

"Gone to many lodges; come back soon; more scalps," replied the warrior, pointing southward.

Bandera understood at once; the Comanche leader had departed to attack Dhanis.

The Mexican looked around upon the prisoners; five men only had escaped the slaughter, and they were all herdsmen. Juan, the half-breed, and the adventurer, Lope, were either among the dead or had escaped.

Some thirty of the savages only remained in charge of the prisoners. The others, after the conflict had ended, had departed at once, on the expedition against Dhanis, as the Comanche chief had said.

Bandera readily saw that the raid was no common one, but that all the fighting men the Indians could muster were engaged in it.

His blood grew cold when he thought

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MAKE WAY FOR IT!

In the coming issue of this JOURNAL will be given the opening chapters of

HAWKEYE HARRY, The Young Trapper Ranger; OR, THE MYSTERY OF THE WOOD.

BY OLL COOMES,
AUTHOR OF "THE BOY SPY," "THE BOY CHIEF," ETC., ETC.

Unquestionably one of the best of living writers of stories involving border life and adventure is Oll Coomes, who is now, we are happy to state, *giving out* to the public a new

ENGAGED TO WRITE EXCLUSIVELY FOR US!

Successful and gratifying as were his "Boy Chief" and "Boy Spy," both are transcended in novel interest and originality by this new creation—for such HAWKEYE HARRY is.

A VERITABLE ORIGINAL

In current literature, and the story of his doings is a striking evidence of the value there is in the new talent which it has been our especial pleasure and privilege to draw forward for recognition. The Young Ranger is

A TRUE SON OF THE WOODS,

skilled in all the mysteries of hunting, trapping, trailing and Indian-fighting, but withal a real forest nobleman, whose hand and heart are ever ready for any good work, with one episode of whose life this most charming story deals. Linked in love with

Old Optic, the Trapper,

he becomes linked by fate with a most remarkable man, known as "The Unknown," or Clouded Heart; and with Red Wing, the Fox Chief—all of whom, almost unconsciously, are led on to trail

A LOST DARLING!

How she was trailed—who was "The Unknown"—the splendid heroism of Old Optic—the keen sagacity of the Fox Chief and his devotion—the fate of the beautiful Sioux Captive—all added to Hawkeye Harry's active participation in the stirring events, make a rare combination of elements of interest. Well may we say—

MAKE WAY FOR IT.

Our Arm-Chair.

The Good is Always Popular.

The steady advance in circulation of this paper illustrates most fully this fact—that "the people" are sharp-sighted and critical, appreciating all literary ventures at their real value. It is so much the fashion in certain journalistic circles to deride what is termed the taste of "the masses," and to jeer at what is truly popular or adapted to a large audience, that it is pleasant occasionally to give these literary snobs a snub in the shape of a few facts which have a big idea behind them. We know where it is easy to swing a gold-headed cane, and to say "aw, dem foin!" over a book that Periwinkle esteems, it is just as easy for him to say "an," rather common" of a book or paper that runs into the people's hands, but Periwinkle may not have brains enough to tell a good from a poor thing, and that is just what is the matter with more than half the "criticism" of this country.

It is susceptible of demonstration that great merit and great circulation go together; and so well is this understood by publishers, that they are ever on the alert for what is meritorious, in the popular sense. They reject nothing that has this merit, but do, every day, reject what is good in a class, or restricted sense. To many a good book they say *no*, because it can interest only a few people; and the editor of the weekly paper every day refuses what is good, in the sense of appropriateness for a certain class, because he demands, for his use, that which will enlist a wider range of sympathy, and interest all classes of readers alike. The "critic" who sneers at that which does so interest is simply a simpleton, who can be made to comprehend that fact by a knowledge of the success of the SATURDAY JOURNAL.

No paper ever published in this country has demanded a higher order of literary merit, in the sense of popular attractiveness, than this paper has steadily enforced, and no paper, in two years' time, has won a wider and more permanent circulation. That its readers are the *dilettanti* decided "million"—is its pride and boast, since, if they demand such a weekly visitor in their homes, what an evidence is it of the wide-spread good taste and intelligence of the people—the great rank and file of American citizenship!

It is now a race among popular journalists, to see who shall have the best matter attainable. Of course, it requires a keen literary appreciation to determine what is best, and it is true that, what one editor rejects another may accept; but, a three months' reading and comparison of the several great weeklies will not fail to indicate the journal of greatest discrimination—that which has published the least commonplace or indifferent matter.

Caring but little for *great names*, and bound by no contracts to old literary workers; but free to choose from what is freshest, most original and striking in the productions of American authors, we occupy a distinct position

among popular journals, and design to maintain that position to the end that the SATURDAY JOURNAL may be synonymous with what is best in popular American journalism.

"The Abominations."—One of the most successful volumes which has been published for a long time is Rev. T. De Witt Talmage's "Abominations of Modern Society." Like all books that strike at Popular and Fashionable Sins, it has awakened an intense antagonism in certain quarters, and an enthusiastic acceptance in other circles, or, as a cotemporary says: "It is one of the best abused and most heartily applauded volumes published in ten years." Talmage is a power in the pulpit, but this book proves that he is equally a power with the pen. He strikes hard and his blows "tell," and any young man or woman who has a moral sense to quicken who can read "The Abominations" without profit, must be of that class who have eyes that see not, and ears that hear not.

"A Rooster on Wheels."—Schele De Vere, in his new work on "American English," has gathered an immense number of the odd sayings, of the East, West, North and South. But, he has omitted one, as we hereby notify him. As for instance: a correspondent says: "Joe Jot, Jr., and Washington Whitehorn are bricks. I am personally acquainted with Wash. He is a rooster on wheels." Which means, we suppose, that the ex-Missionary is "some pumpkins," or knows how to "put a head on you," or can "lam the elephant," or can "wake snakes," or can "cut it fat as the next man," or can tell "who is Jerusha." One thing is certain, if Whitehorn gets his deserts he'll go into the Cabinet as Minister of the Interior on the principle that he who makes a lean rib grow fat is a public benefactor, and should be exempt from a poll-tax.

THE "FAT CONTRIBUTOR."

HE IS A CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT.

The hour has struck. I can hesitate no longer. The highest interests of the nation demand that I present myself before the American people as a candidate for President. I have waited for some one else to bring me out, but no one seems to have thought of me. And I don't think very much of myself, but a man don't want to think much of himself to be a candidate for President nowadays. If he had any self-regard at the outset, he would think very little of himself by the time the campaign was over.

I am one of the people—I might say, one of the boys. I came up from obscurity, and I have brought a good deal of obscurity up with me. I never had any politics—nor much else—but I am "Liberal" to a fault, ready to receive votes from any quarter, although I am not prepared to give quarters for any votes.

As for a platform, suit yourselves, gentlemen. The lecture platform would probably suit me as well as any other. Having stood on nearly every platform in the country, it would be difficult for you to get up a platform I couldn't stand on. In the absence of a platform, give me four aces, and I'll stand on that.

I am the especial friend of the laboring man. No man likes to see a man work better than I do. In fact, I had rather see a man work than work myself. I am not only averse to working more than eight hours, but I am opposed to working a single blamed hour!

I am in favor of paying the national debt. It is, in fact, the only debt I am in favor of paying. And rather than not see it paid during my administration, I engage to pay it out of my own pocket.

As far as the civil service is concerned, all I can say is, if the country will do a civil service by me and elect me, I am ready to do a civil service by the country. No one can speak not no fairer nor that.

Retrenchment is my motto. If you can't put retrenchment plank in the platform, put it in a board. I am ready to work without any salary, but I shall insist upon my board.

I am inclined to Free Trade, preferring to feel free to trade whenever I please, but if a Tariff plank is necessary to my election, put it in! I shall get on a Tariff I ain't elected.

Pledge me as strong as you please to the temperance folks. The temperance pledge don't hurt nobody. I am not only in favor of women's rights, but of women's rights-and-lefts, if they prefer to wear them. I am in favor of women voting, provided they vote for me; and I see no reason why a woman shouldn't hold office, except perhaps the difficulty of getting hold of it.

I may be asked how I would treat the Indians. I wouldn't "treat" them at all. They have been treated too much and too often. My private opinion is that it will be a treat when there isn't an Indian left this side of the happy hunting-grounds.

No relative can hold office under my administration, no matter whether he is my relative or the relative of some other man. I shall appoint none but old bachelors, childless widowers and orphans. I have a few relatives of my own holding office now, but they shall be promptly kicked out as soon as I am elected. One brother-in-law has a little coal-office on the dock; he must give it up. A third cousin drinks too much occasionally and gets office foot. He can't get office under me. You see I am determined to reduce the "relative" expenses of the Government.

I engage not to receive any gift, unless it be the highest office in the gift of the people. If I am ever called "our present Chief Magistrate" I won't be a Chief Magistrate of presents. Not being a man of commanding presence, anyhow, there would probably be few presents that I could command. What few natural gifts I may have, however, I shall beg to retain, as they are not worth making any fuss about.

I stand by the old Constitution that has been tried. No man has tried his constitution more than I have tried mine. I accept the amendments, every one of them. When it comes to amends I can shout Amen! as loud as any one.

I understand there is an ambitious man named George Francis Train, who aspires to be President on his promise to free Ireland. I engage not only to free Ireland, but to make Irish whisky free into the bargain. I shall at least be able to do the George Francis on the popular vote, unless one or the other of us is prevented from going to the polls. I believe I could even tie the Davenport Brothers.

I shall inaugurate a wholesale emancipation business as soon as I am inaugurated. I engage to emancipate women from the thralldom of Fashion, to give the "boys"

their rights, and abolish the cruel edict which excludes children in arms from the elevating and purifying influences of the theaters. I pledge myself to free everybody and to free postage; to free soil, free pews in churches, free Press, free passes, free drinks, and freebooters.

WHO TOLD YOU?

Who told you that Mrs. Baggles was a shiftless woman, who never attended the sewing-circle and rarely went to church? Somebody told you, eh? Well, all I can say is, that I wish somebody would hold their tongue and mind his or her business. I don't like these mysterious *somebodies*, but I'm sure if they have nothing better to do than to go about remarking the shortcomings of their acquaintances, "*somebody*" is the right name for them; they don't deserve to have a *Christian* cognomen.

So somebody told you that Mrs. Baggles was shiftless? I wish she could go into the said house of the said Mrs. Baggles (as the lawyers have it) and see things in their right light. She'd see a woman with a house full of children, toiling, hour after hour, for her brood, and doing her duty by them.

What can she have to do? Just as if it wasn't enough to take care of the youngsters' clothes, mending and darning (for if you've seen children who didn't tear their garments, you've seen curiosities that Bama would, no doubt, offer a fabulous price for), to say nothing of household drudgery and the thousand and one things that make life so sweet. (?)

Who told you that Mrs. Baggles would be doing more for her soul if she worked for the Heavens? Somebody again, eh? Somebody must be a heathen herself, and I don't want her to come this way, while I am sewing on buttons and my needle is sharp. Do you suppose Mrs. Baggles wants her own family to grow up like heathens, as they would, were she to let them go about "tattered and torn?"

Who told you they don't talk scandal at some sewing-circles? Somebody once more, eh? Then I must acknowledge myself to be mistaken, but I never heard of a circle lasting a great while where gossip was prohibited.

Oh! am I not getting it hot and heavy from my readers? They are putting me down as unchristian. "Don't believe in working for the heathen!" I blush for you, Eve.

I will allow you to blush just as much as you want to when I give way to such sentiments as that. I do believe in working for them—working as the Lord worked for them, going about doing good among those around him who needed his counsels. If the ladies of the sewing-circles only would bear in mind that, in his teachings, He does not tell us we must sew for the heathen with our fingers, and backbite our neighbors with our tongues! Who told you, Eve, that they do so? Somebody, eh?

No, my love; I will exonerate somebody from blame there; like that good old brusque fellow, Andrew Jackson, "I will take the responsibility." I've seen them; I've heard them, and, if you want to take me up for libel, you may do it.

If you'll show me that it is better to forsake the young heathens at home for those abroad, I'll take back every word I have said, but I won't do it until then.

I am sure no one would work more cheerfully in a good cause than Eve; but, if it is going to prejudice me against my neighbor by attending these scandalous—beg pardon—sewing-circles, I prefer to work for the heathen in my own little chamber among my pinks and posies, who never scandalize their brother and sister plants, and to whom I never have to say, "Who told you?"

EVE LAWLESS.

CATS.

WONDERFUL four-footer! you have nine lives, which preserve you, when flung blindly from a fourth-story window, in a manner which is the admiration and, sometimes, the disgust of man—in a manner which shows that you feel you have a life to live, or rather nine lives to enjoy, and that you meant to do so, in spite of all his endeavors to crush your young endeavors in the shoot, by shooting you from a top window.

Cats have coats of many colors. Some go a-sparcking when vigorously rubbed in the dark. Their tails differ. Some are made for strength, and some for beauty.

Smith (you know Smith) gave me a kitten last Christmas. It grew and multiplied, but not so the mice. One day the pantry door was ajar. It saw it, of course. When I came in, and went down stairs, it was digesting the last piece of beefsteak with a sickened air. I stole in softly, and seized it wrathfully by the hind-legs, to give it time to realize the enormity of its offense, and then called for cord.

I tied its legs firmly together, and, fastening a boulder round its neck, took aim at the nearest pond; and then turned my back on it, feeling sorry for its eating the steak, for which burning at the stake might have been a fitter fate.

At breakfast next morning, while drinking my first cup of a refreshing beverage, I felt a terrible sensation in the region of my neck, as if a Bengal Tiger had fastened there. I turned pale, and round about in a trice. At that moment something dropped recklessly to the floor, and I saw the last portion of a tail, as I glanced toward the door, which was retreating at about 240 (miles) per minute. But the knottiness of that final member discovered the identity of the owner.

N. B.—N. N.—Never tried to kill a cat since. Never!!!

Cats and dogs are separated by feelings of hostility, but often united in deadly fray, when an interesting but sad spectacle comes up, and each comes with wonderful and deadly vigor to the scratch.

Cats I was very fond of—stoning—when a boy. When I grew older, Jones made a present of a feminine specimen to my mother.

One day we missed her. In a week she reappeared, but not alone. Ten kittens were gamboling around her maternal and sedate form.

It was too much. I made a rush at the procession. The younger ones immediately disappeared, but the maternal fastened in my leg.

After I had kicked it off, it showed a desire for more leg. I shoved it up, and flung it bodily out of the window.

Soon after I heard a shot fired.

It was Jones, with his new revolver. I thanked him, in my blindest manner, for his kindness in ridding me of the incubance.

He told me not to mention it, and said he had done it to save his bacon.

We then bathed the little ones in the river, but forgot to take them out to dry. In conclusion, I dislike cats, which they have discovered before this.

CALEB CARTY.

Foolscap Papers.

Wanted—A Pony.

I WANTED a riding pony, so I advertised. Was afraid of a horse; would rather attempt to ride a lion. Thought if I had a little pony, and he would start to run off, I could jump off, catch him and throw him over the fence; besides, if he would ever throw me off, I wouldn't have so far to fall.

I hardly knew the difference between a horse and a cow, never having had any thing to do with a horse.

The next morning an Irishman drove up with a horse in a cart. There, he said, was just the animal I wanted. I said he was too large. He said I needn't give him so much feed, and that would reduce him. Thought that a happy idea; but he was blind. Irishman said that was a good saying; he wouldn't shy. Thought so myself. He said a bony horse hadn't so much flesh to carry and could get along faster. That horse was very gentle; never jumped or ran away; I could have him for \$125.

"That's too much," I said. "What!" said he; "and didn't I pay that for him twelve years ago? and do you think I would sell him for any thing less now?"

I told him of course not, and that I would try him; so he unhitched him and I got on—my wife protesting; but he wouldn't go a bit. Owner said he probably was saying his prayers, as he was a religious horse. Then he got a slab and gave him such a lick that would knock a horse fifty feet, whether he wanted to go or not; but he didn't move. Asked him if that was the way all horses did at the first; he said it was.

Then he tried to pry him and then to pull him. I told him I thought he would be a splendid horse to put on wheels. Irishman said if I wanted to make fun of him, I shouldn't have him at any price; said a bone-boiling man had offered him a good price for him, and that he should have him. So he took him away—when he took a notion to go.

Next a fellow brought round an exceedingly small pony. I liked its size; thought that was just the pony I was after; almost bought him before I tried him. Man said \$150; I said cheap enough. Did I ever see such a nice little pony? I never did! Man said he had refused to trade him for Dexter; was a thoroughbred Arabian courser, ran a mile inside of fifteen minutes, and only stopped to rest twice. I got on it; found that if his head and tail could be transposed, he would go very well, for he started backward on a gallop. Friend came along and asked me if I had a partiality for mules. Was it a mule? He said it was.

Next came a medium-sized horse. Man said he never kicked only with his hind feet; shied only on proper occasions; was deaf—a good trait in a horse; had two good eyes and the glands—the glands was something every horse hadn't got. Got on him; he started off before I got my feet in the stirrups; lightning was left far behind; horse turned off at the corner; I didn't, but went straight ahead about fifty feet. My head made such a furrow in the road that you'd have thought they were going to lay gas-pipes. Rode home on a slumber, and didn't think any thing more about horses for a week; thought I never would.

Then came a man with a pony that looked like it was old when the world began. Man said a horse got one tooth each year, showed me the pony had put two teeth—one above and one below—therefore he was only two years old. Pony had a splendid frame—which was so, for there was no flesh on him to hide it. He convinced me that a horse with one ear was odder than one ear with two horses; and that one extremely crooked fore-leg was better than two of the kind to one horse. Said pony's appetite was very good; that tail and mane would grow out again. Got on him and started off. I started off pretty quickly because the pony went to walking on his hands with his hind feet in the atmosphere. Oh, yes; I started off; I did!

A Jersey man brought a small pony next with the biggest head I ever saw on a quadruped. He said it was a remarkably fine head. That pony had as much sense as a man; here he told him to lay down, which he did with alacrity, but all the telling in the United States couldn't have got him up again. We were obliged to lift him up, when he started off in the rear of a load of hay that went by, and I was glad the owner couldn't get him back.

Then I tried a little pony, whose size was just what I wanted, but I found that, in trotting, he jumped four feet up and then lit in the same place. Although he failed to amuse me much, he nearly annihilated me; every time he came down it was like falling off a fourth-story building.

Then I tried a little Canadian pony. There was activity in him; he was all life. He started off with me like a cannon ball, and ran down street for two squares so fast that I didn't know my hat was off, and stopped all of a sudden; I didn't stop. Oh, no. I began a series of somersaults that would make a man's head swim to think about. Away I went, looking like a wagon-wheel, with every fellow in it frightened to death. Women screamed and fainted; men ran out to catch me, but I had gone by. Dogs ran out, and whenever one grabbed my coat-tails he went higher than a steeple; wagons were placed across the street in my way, but I went over them. The people all along that street got an injunction against me, but that didn't stop me. Fourteen policemen were powerless to arrest me. On I went! I prayed that I might be allowed to stop only ten minutes for rest and refreshments. I went through a frame house that was going down street on a wagon, and stopped six squares beyond by running against an old acquaintance. He asked me what I was up to. I told him I was up to sixty miles an hour.

Going back we met the hook and ladder company on the hunt of me. I went home and took sick. My head had been turned—more than usual. The doctor said I had gone round all wrong too much, but, by skillful treatment, they would bring me round all right.

I have taken the advertisement out of the paper. Has anybody got an easy trotting cow to sell?

Sorely, WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

Readers and Contributors.

TO CORRESPONDENTS AND AUTHORS.—No MSS. received that are not fully prepaid in postage.—No MSS. prepared for future orders.—Unusable MSS. promptly returned only where stamps accompany the inclosure, for such return.—Book MSS. postage is two cents for every four ounces, or fraction thereof, but must be marked Book MS., and be sealed in wrappers with open end, in order to pass the mails at "Book rates."—No correspondence of any nature is permissible in a package marked as "Book MS."—MSS. which are imperfect are not used or wanted. In all cases our choice rests first upon merit or fitness; second, upon excellent MSS. "every 7," length. Of two MSS. of equal merit we always prefer the shorter.—Never insert on both sides of a sheet. The Commercial Note size paper is most convenient to editor and compositor, saving of each page as it is written, and carefully giving it its full or page number.—A rejection by no means implies a want of merit. Many MSS. unavailable to us are well worthy of use.—All experienced and popular writers will find us ever ready to give the offerings early attention.—Correspondents must look to this column for all information in regard to contributions. We can not write letters except in special cases.

Shall have to decline "The Tyrant's Fate," "Hope On," "A Graceless Beauty," "Nine Lives," "A Penny's worth of Folly," "A Piece of Advice," "Keep to the Right," "Pleasant Thoughts," "Lacy's Leap-year Proposal," "Old Ben's Fortune," "Flowers," "My Betsey," "Ship on Fire," "The Broken Pledge," "Youth's Vision of Cupid's Dominion," "The Diamond Ring," "The Gift of Brass," "A Pound of Pearls," "The Showman's Protege," "Bad Night," "A Lay of Dust."

Will find room for "Gold or Dross," "When," "Unrest," "A Night of Stars," "Badajo Sweet," "A Big Story," "No, Sir!"

The Love sketches by Miss F. F. G. we can not at present decide on.

The two serials by H. G. T. are not read. Will answer by letter.

B. J. Territories become States by first having a given number of inhabitants; then by Convention assembling and adopting a Constitution; this is sent to Congress, which accepts or rejects the demand of the Territory to be admitted as a State.

Z. J. K. L. We know of no process to stop a person from growing. Perhaps Whitehorn does.

ERRATA. S. S. No "special favors" are shown to any author. We accept or reject on the direct availability of each MS. We know "favoritism" does prevail in some papers, and especially in all the monthly magazines, which are largely written up, month by month, by "a ring" of writers.

A. C. B. WILDE. The sketch betrays no especial talent. It is simply a somewhat exciting incident possibly told. No doubt the author has a true ambition to impel you to authorship, you will succeed, providing you study. The world is all too full of writers of ordinary talent.

AFFLICTED. We know personally nothing whatever of the person referred to. The "Sketch of his Life" was an advertisement of his own, in the machine named and the poems doubtless were paid for as advertisements, as the poet named, we believe, does any kind of puffery in verse that pays. You can, however, come to New York and find more admirable advisers.

J. E. WAISH. We know nothing, personally, as to the good faith of the advertiser, but should say, in general terms, beware of such adventures as requiring money to strangers of whose responsibility you are not assured.

S. W. MCG. Mr. Alken's dramatic trips will not travel this summer. Mr. Alken will give up the coming months to his editorial labors. A letter addressed to Mr. Frederick Blume, Music Dealer, New York city, will reach him.—Write to American News Company, New York, for book on Boxing.

M. L. H. There is no way so good as to abandon the drink utterly. If a slight stimulant is really necessary you have it in the water, which is the best, keep hops in the house and make daily an infusion or tea of them.

OVERLAND KIT. The best way to "make up" to a young lady is to make her feel that you are her friend. There is no "easy way" to learn telegraphing. Consult a physician about your blood.

WORKMAN. You should devote as much time as possible to eating your meals, makes very neat and food causes indigestion, and plants the seed of future ills and diseases. Breakfast you should be careful to make your most hearty meal, as it is the most necessary to health. An old proverb is quaint but true, says: "A good breakfast is the doorway to a happy day's work."

SERLEND MOORE. Calico is not as much worn now as formerly, although it makes very neat and serviceable dresses. Calico was first known in England in the year 1681, and came from a town in India, Calcut, which was then called Calcutta.

FOR. "Club-foot" patterns for pantaloons are going out of fashion now. The width of the leg is about the same as last year, with an increase of "spring" over the foot.

SOLDIER. In Bayonne, France, the bayonet was first made, and from that city derived its name. It was first used in battle in the year 1603, and in a short while after better and better bayonets were civilized nations that wanted to butcher each other.

YOUNG AND OLD. Young men should dress neatly, and yet not too old. It looks better, however, for a young man to dress old, than for an elderly man to dress like a dandy. A man should be particularly careful to dress according to his years. This may also apply to the "fair sex," as a rule, as it is a great credit and disgusting to see an old woman "make up" as though she were a young girl.

STUDENT. Your diet should be light, and rather spare than abundant. A student also requires regular and sufficient daily exercise. His sleep should be all that health requires, and he should invariably retire at an early hour. His room should be airy, bright, and abundant. His study and sleeping-room should be well ventilated. If a student wishes to study diligently and with vigor, he must have his head and heavy feelings, he should carefully follow the preceding rules.

LENA. If a person is choking from a fish-bone in the throat, insert the forefinger and press upon the root of the tongue, so as to induce vomiting. If this does not succeed, let him swallow a large piece of soft bread or potato; and if this also fail, give him a strong mustard emetic.

M. M. Gardening is, in China, brought to greater perfection than in any other known country, except in Japan. These two Oriental nations copy nature strictly, and thereby show their wonderfully good common sense.

NELLIE. Your evening black silk will look very pretty trimmed with a new lace called the "daisy lace." It is about the size of the lace which is formed by large silk daisies, whose effect is very pretty on black silk.

H. M. L. The oldest newspaper in the world is a Pekin weekly, which is printed and published twice a week, and has commenced more than two thousand years ago, when the now powerful "Western nations" were barbarians.

ANGEL. To make an elegant bread pudding, take light white bread and cut it in thin slices. Put into a pudding dish a layer of any sort of preserves, then a slice of bread, and repeat until the mold is almost full. Four or five of a pint of warm milk, in which four beaten eggs have been mixed; cover the mold or dish with a piece of linen, place it in a saucepan with a little boiling water, and let it boil for twenty minutes, and serve with sauce.

NURSE. In case a lady faints, lay her flat on her back; the head should be as low or even lower than the body. Unloosen her dress as quickly as possible; apply smelling-salts to her nostrils; if they be not at hand, burn a piece of rag under her nose. Dash cold water upon her face; throw open the windows; fan her, and by no means allow a crowd to collect around her, as is generally done, thus preventing a free circulation of air.

KNOWLEDGE. The most stupendous canal in the world is in China. It was commenced about the tenth century. It passes over two thousand miles, and through forty-two cities.

CAREFREE. To give a new-wood stain to wood, use the following: one gallon of alcohol, and two ounces of camwood. Let it stand for two or three days in a warm place; then add three ounces of extract of logwood if you wish very dark stain; also one ounce of aquafortis. Two or more coats may be given to suit your fancy.

SCHOOLBOY. To destroy the worms on your hands, use pure nitric acid, which is easily applied, and fully to the warts, by means of a small stick of cedar-wood or a camel's hair pencil, every other day, until the warts disappear. Care should be taken that the acid does not touch the healthy skin, as it will act as a caustic to it.

D—V—

BY TOM GOULD.

Now husband dear,
Don't look so queer,
It's seldom that I tease you,
I want to buy—
Ah! now you sigh!
I thought perhaps 'twould please you.

There's Mrs. Briggs,
And Martha Briggs—
And Dingle's oldest daughter
Has bought her two,
A pink and blue—
How can that man support her!

Now I am sure
I can't endure
To see them all outvie me,
So say the word—
Don't look absurd!
You know you can't deny me.

Pink what? Blue what?
Oh! I forgot.
To tell the name—brog pardon.
My heart doth crave—
Now don't look grave!
I want a—Dolly Varden!

She had her way,
"Twice bought that day—
The best in all the city.
Of lies, tenfold
The more she told,
When he declared 'twas pretty.

Madeleine's Marriage:

OR,
THE HEIR OF BROADHURST.BY MRS. E. F. ELLET,
AUTHOR OF "UNDER THE CLOUD."

CHAPTER XXIII.

LIGHT IN DARK PLACES.

In a plainly but comfortably furnished room two persons were seated four days after the occurrences last related.

A thick curtain was drawn so as to divide one-third of the apartment from the rest; and this end opened into a small room beyond. There was a worn carpet on the floor, with an oaken stand of shelves containing books and papers; the table and chairs of the same wood. A hand-organ stood in one corner, and a monkey was coiled in a box on the hearth, fast asleep.

A young man, who had been sitting by the table, aroused himself lazily, and remarked that, as it was getting late, he would see about watering the horses.

His companion was several years older than he was; apparently middle-aged; and his powerful frame and muscular limbs betokened a maturity of strength that had as yet experienced no decline. His features were regular and handsome, though his complexion was bronzed by exposure; and his luxuriant, curling beard and whiskers concealed a portion of the face. His dark eyes were bright and full, and quick in expressing every feeling that possessed him. His hands were enwoven as by toil, and the veins could be seen like stiff cords, traversing them and the uncovered wrists. He had been leaning in a thoughtful attitude, against the mantelpiece.

When the young man spoke, he made a gesture enjoining quiet, and glanced at the end of the room curtained off.

"There is no danger of disturbing her," whispered the other. "She has slept since daybreak, Aubrey told me; and the doctor said that was very good for her. I wanted to give you an account of my last jaunt."

The elder looked up, ready to listen.

"Stop that monkey of yours," he said, impatiently; "he snores as loud as a tambour-major."

"Poor fellow! he is tired out!" said the young man. "Be quiet, there, will you!" and he stirred the box with his foot. "It has poured rain for the last two days at such a rate, the creature has caught a shocking bad cold, and his handsome new jacket is regular done for. If it had not been for that, I would have stopped in the city to hear the trial of the little milliner for marrying two husbands—bigamy I think they call it."

"Ah, by-the-by," muttered the elder man, glancing at a copy of the *Times* that lay on the table, "they've given her ten years of it!"

"Ten years! you don't mean to say that! and after being at so many great trials, to think I should have missed this one! Were you there, Sanders?"

"No; but I heard all about it at the police office."

"The police office! What were you doing there?"

"I went to leave a pocketbook that a young gentleman had left in my carriage; I heard about the case; and I saw in the *Times* that the woman had got ten years of it for bigamy."

"Poor thing! I am sorry for her! One husband is often more than enough for a woman's patience. But this girl whose life you saved: when I came home this morning, and into this room, I found mother Max and the doctor. What has been the matter?"

"After I brought her from the river," whispered the other, with a glance of caution, "it was too far to take her to the hospital; so I brought her here, and sent for Max and the physician. The next morning she was in a raging fever, and we despaired of her life; but, toward nightfall, she became calmer. She has been ill four days; but the doctor says now she is out of danger."

"And so the poor girl wanted to drown herself?"

"Nothing of the kind. Some silly story like that got into the papers. I saw two ruffians in masks carrying her onto the bridge, covered with their cloaks. They lifted her over the parapet, and threw her into the water."

"Lawkamecy! To think there should be such villains in the world! They must be denounced at the police court. Here's a case for a grand trial! Let me go, and carry the news! I should like to be in the witness-box!"

"Stop, George! Don't you think I should have given the information before this, if it had been necessary?"

"And why didn't you?"

"Because the young lady could not yet be restored to her family: because—she is not even now strong enough to undergo any agitation."

"But the villains must be punished. You will let them escape?"

"They will not escape!" muttered Sanders, gloomily.

"You should have had them locked up. Do you know who they are?"

"I know one of them."

"Not the other?"

"His face seemed familiar when I saw him. But both were masked when they did the deed."

"Who is the young lady?"

"Her name must not be mentioned here at present."

"Have not her friends searched for her?"

"I have sent them word she is safe."

"And they have not been to see her?"

"They do not know where she is. I have my reasons for that. She was too ill to be removed."

"How anxious they must have been!"

"Twice a day they have had news of her: they know she is in good hands and under medical care; and that she will return to them the moment she can be taken with safety from this place."

"You will be richly rewarded—that is if her family is wealthy; and I suppose it is, from what Max told me."

The elder man made no reply, unless a deep sigh, that sounded like a moan, might be one. His face was concealed, his head resting on his arm.

"May I go in and see her?" whispered George Miles, after a few moments' silence.

"Not for your life! Forgive me: I did not mean to be so violent!" She must not be disturbed; but you may go and fetch a little present I mean to give her—or send her—for I hardly know how to offer it."

"What is that?"

"Her bonnet was lost in the river: so, this morning, as I went by the market, I saw a lovely little cap, with pink ribbons, on a stall, and bought it for her. It is in the corn-bin; you may bring it."

"Certainly!" exclaimed the young man, with alacrity. He went out softly, and presently returned with the purchase, wrapped in brown paper.

"And I've got a little yellow shawl," he said, stealing on tiptoe across the room, "with beautiful red and green flowers on it. I meant it for Alice; it cost me five shillings. It shall go with the cap! Now I will go and water the beasts; but, Sanders, if the monkey wakes, give him something to eat; for the poor animal must be nervous, if I can judge by myself."

"Never fear; I will attend to him."

As George went out, Sanders flung himself into the chair by the table, and bowed his head upon his crossed arms.

Not many minutes had elapsed before the door again opened, and George softly called his name.

As he went to the door, he whispered: "A young gentleman here wishes to speak with you."

The man stepped outside into the alley leading to the stables. A very handsome young man, with a bright face and noble cast of features, stood there.

"I believe I am right," he said: "you are the owner of coach number two hundred and twenty-six?"

"I have driven that carriage."

"Then it is the same. I left a pocket-book in it the other night."

"You did, sir; and I took it to the police office. It can be claimed there."

"It has just been returned to me," said Frank Duclos, for it was he who spoke.

"I am glad it is in the hands of the rightful owner," returned the coachman, absently.

"The pocketbook contained money; and not only that, but papers of great value to me. Every thing is undisturbed. I have come to thank you for your honesty, and to offer you the money as a merited reward."

"No, sir," replied Sanders, refusing the gift. "If I had retained property that did not belong to me, I should have been dishonest. A man deserves no reward for not being a thief."

"You are a noble fellow!" cried Frank.

"Then you must allow me to make you another offer. One or two friends and I keep our horses in the same stables. If you will undertake their superintendence, I will leave it to you to name your salary; for I think an honest man can not be too highly paid."

"I am very grateful to you, sir, for such generous kindness. But an old soldier can not put on the livery of a groom!"

"A soldier! You have served, then?"

"Ten years—in the — Dragoons, on the Continent."

"I beg your pardon for my proposal; the livery should never succeed the uniform. But if you would like to go abroad again, I have influence enough to get you the post of Ranger to the forest—either in France or Switzerland."

"I thank you with all my heart, sir. Some day, perhaps, I may avail myself of your kindness. It would be a solace to me, after an unhappy life, to end my days in such an office."

"You shall have it—my honest old soldier—whenever you like; for I feel sure I can use the same influence to get it for you. Call on me at any time. Here is my card."

He gave the other a card, which Sanders took, and read the name on it, growing pale as he did so, as with some painful recollection.

"There was a Colonel Duclos," he said, with hesitation.

"It was my father. He was killed many years ago."

He looked at the hackman, and was startled to see the expression of his countenance.

"It is not possible that you knew him? Can you have served under him? He was in service on the Continent."

"No—no—that was before—I never served under Colonel Duclos."

"He was a grand and noble man! I was at school, and had seen but little of him. But he left me an honored name; and since I lost him fortune has come: money, which I would fain have done without, if my father had been spared to me."

The hackman, to Frank's surprise, seized his hand and wrung it in his own.

"You seem agitated, my good fellow. Perhaps you have lost a son?"

"No—but I have lost—never mind! It is no use talking of the past. Have you any commands to-day?"

"None; only remember to apply to me in case you decide differently, on reconsidering my offer. We shall meet again, no doubt."

"I hope so," answered the other, in a low, impressive tone. "Good-day, sir. Be careful how you step across the yard; it is not in first-rate repair."

"The son of Colonel Duclos!" he repeated, to himself, as he went back into the house. "How that name brings back the old time!"

George had returned during his absence, and having decoyed Mother Max into the outer room, had sent in the cap to the young lady, though he had not yet ventured on offering the shawl.

Oriel was so much better, and refreshed by several hours of sound sleep, that she insisted on rising and being dressed.

The good dame who waited on her, brought water into the room where she had slept, and assisted her in making her toilette.

When that was completed, and the new cap put on in place of a bonnet, she declared her intention of going out beyond the curtain, to thank her preserver for the kind care taken of her.

She was too feeble to walk without assistance, but was conscious of no ailment beyond weakness. In the clean dress and cap she looked exquisitely beautiful. Her dark-brown curls, clustering round her face, set off by contrast her pale, pure complexion, and her hazel eyes sparkled like limpid springs. She had just passed beyond the lifted curtain as Sanders entered.

Max placed a chair for her patient, and helped her to it. Her attention was fastened on the monkey, which had started from his box, and perched on its edge, stared at her in amazement.

The hackman, too, was looking at her fixedly, with an expression of unutterable sadness in his eyes.

At last Oriel perceived him, and with an exclamation of pleasure, held out her hand.

Sanders came nearer, and took the little white hand in his large brown one, still looking in her face.

"I wondered if you had gone out," said the girl, "without allowing me to thank you—now I am able to sit up and speak. This kind nurse has told me how ill I have been! And you sent word to mamma that I was quite safe?"

A bow was the only reply; for the man could not trust himself to speak.

"I have been here four days," the girl proceeded, "and yet it is only this morning—since I awakened, that I have been able to think of my position—and what I must do. You have shown me great care and kindness, sir."

Sanders made a gesture as if waiving thanks.

"I appreciate your noble generosity. You must have a long account against me; the doctor's visits; the good nurse here; and all."

"Do not speak so," her listener articulated, with difficulty.

"And I thank you for your pretty little present, too. How do you like me in it?"

"It is beautiful."

"And now I must trespass on your kindness for another favor. I am quite strong enough. You must take me home."

"Have a cup of tea first," said the old nurse, presenting the steaming beverage.

Here, Miss; and eat a biscuit; 'twill give you strength."

She drew up the table nearer, and set on it the cup and saucer, and a plate of biscuits.

"Or may I make you a bit of toast?"

"No, my good friend; this is enough."

The girl drank the tea and ate a little.

"I feel stronger already. When will you take me home?" she asked, of the hackman, whose strange silence appeared to make her uneasy.

"Your father?" he asked, his eyes flashing.

"My father!" exclaimed Oriel. "I have no father. He is a very cruel man who calls himself so. It was to escape from him that I left home that night!"

"He is unkind to you, then?"

"Very unkind, whenever I see him, which is not often."

"You will go home to your mother?"

"Certainly. The doctor would make no objection. The fever has left me. If there should be any danger, I can write, and mamma will come to me."

"Heaven forbid!"

"What did you say, sir?"

"Nothing—but—the lady must not come to so poor a place. You shall go to her; do not fear, Miss Clermont."

"I have no fear, indeed! You have been so kind to me, why should I? But my name is not Clermont. I am Oriel Dorant."

"Your mother is Mrs. Clermont?"

"She took that name because it was her uncle's will—when she inherited the property."

"True—she dropped her husband's name when she became rich."

"It was not her wish to do so."

"Was it not? Are you sure of that?"

The man's eyes glittered strangely.

"No; she always loved best the name I bear."

"How do you know that?" asked Sanders, advancing a step, and looking as if he would read the girl's very soul. She started in alarm.

"Pardon me! I was thoughtless to frighten you."

"You did not frighten me; but you looked so strangely—as if you were angry. You must go home with me; and you shall see my mother, and she will thank you and reward you for saving my life."

"Do not talk so, Miss—Dorant! You—like that name?"

"It is my own; it was my dear father's—my father, who was killed—"

"Was your father killed?"

"Many years since; when I was a little child."

"Do you remember him?"

"No, not distinctly: I was too young. But mamma has described him as a very handsome man, and as good and noble as he was handsome. Oh, sir, you are crying—your sympathize with me."

Impatiently had the hackman dashed the tears from his eyes, while his heart heaved with emotion he could not repress.

"I have lost a daughter!" he said, with a burst of feeling.

"You! I am grieved for you! How much you must have suffered! How old was she?"

"About your own age, Miss."

"Indeed? Did she die of fever?"

"No. The story is too painful. I can not tell it now. Perhaps you may hear it one day. If you will excuse me, I will get the carriage ready to take you home."

He went out hastily.

George came in almost immediately after, and announced that he would drive the full, majestic form of Mrs. Clermont. Hugh stopped as he saw this, and looked at her.

She threw up her veil, disclosing a face he instantly recognized, changed as it was by privation and suffering endured for long years.

It was a pallid, wasted face, that had once been beautiful. The dark eyes seemed more large and bright for the attenuation of the cheeks. The dark hair lay in masses over a pale, narrow forehead.

Marlitt waved Hugh to begone, as he placed a chair for his visitor. Hugh left the room.

"You may be surprised that I have taken this liberty, Mr. Marlitt," the lady began;

"And mamma will send for him at once. She will be impatient to thank him."

"Are you ready now, Miss?"

Oriel turned to take leave of the old nurse, on whom she forced her little silken purse and its contents. Then she looked at the monkey, which, having dispatched his breakfast, stood on the back of a chair, steadfastly regarding her.

"Here, Jocko!" called his master to him. "Allow me to present him, Miss. Jock, don't you see the lady? Manners, sir! Pray excuse him, Miss. He's thinking of the rounds we have to take to-day. You may rest, Jocko, till I come back; and then—to business."

The girl laughed, and followed the young organ-grinder out of the humble room where she had been sheltered so kindly. She looked around for Sanders, but could not see him. She asked after him, and sent a grateful message, saying he would soon hear from her mother. Then she was assisted into the carriage, and George mounted the box, driving rapidly toward Miss Clermont's house.

CHAPTER XXIV.

HUGH'S APPALLING DISCOVERY.

TRE evening before the last incident recorded, the two conspirators were again together, in the apartment of the hotel occupied by Mr. Marlitt Clermont.

The newspapers had mentioned the fact that a young woman who had attempted suicide had been saved by a "watchman," who had drawn her from under Waterloo Bridge; but as nothing further had transpired, the assassine cherished the hope that their victim had not escaped.

A strict watch, kept by the pretended Jew, upon the house of Mrs. Clermont, assured them that her daughter had not been restored to her; and had she been saved, her preserver would surely have hastened to claim his reward, or to satisfy the anxiety of her friends.

Julius had been discharged from the lady's service, though he remained in the neighborhood, and had been several times at the house. From him the Jew derived his information.

In short, both villains were firmly convinced that the girl was dead. Hugh was sure that his employer had only to enter on the possession of her fortune. He claimed, therefore, immediate payment of the large amount guaranteed to him.

"It is a pity we had to take such a course," observed Marlitt. "The body was carried down the river, and can never be identified. It will be hard to prove her death. We should have carried out our design, and got her away to some safe place."

"That was impossible," returned the other villain; "and what's done can't be undone. We were just about in for a scrape, as it was, and it would not have done to let her go scot free, after seizing her."

"No, that would have been disastrous to all our plans. It is well all turned out as it did; though I never meant she should meet such a fate. It was an ugly job," and he shuddered at the recollection.

"An ugly job well done," returned Hugh; "and you need not pretend to be sorry for it."

"I can not blame myself or you. Self-preservation is the first law of nature; and our safety required what was done."

"Then you should have no objection to paying me for my share in it?"

"I have told you that you shall be paid."

"Ay, but when?"

"As soon as I can get possession. I must prove the girl's death, and take the necessary legal steps."

"Very well: give me a couple of thousand in hand, and I will wait for the rest."

"I can not do it, Hugh; I am short of funds myself."

"Then call on the madam again."

"You must see yourself that will not do just now. We must move cautiously—very cautiously."

"And how long am I to be kept out of my dues—out of the first instalment?"

"I trust only for a few days. If I had succeeded in carrying off the girl, I could have realized something handsome at once, by compelling her to marry Ormsby, or working on her mother's terrors for her. This unexpected turn has thrown every thing out of order. Some delay now is inevitable."

The ruffian muttered curses under his breath. He was in terrible want of money. Some he must have at once—that very night, or be driven to desperate measures. He urged this necessity.

Marlitt unlocked a secretary and took out a bundle of bank-notes.

"These are all I have," he said, "for my expenses to the end of this month. By that time I can draw an instalment of income, the little that remains from my last overdraw. You shall have half, and not a farthing more."

With sullen grumblings Hugh received the money.

At that moment a knock on the door startled the two guilty men. Marlitt hastily thrust the notes into the secretary-drawer, and closed and locked it. Hugh put his roll in his vest-pocket.

It was a servant of the hotel, who announced:

"A lady to speak with Mr. Clermont."

The gentleman was white with a fear he had never felt before. Perhaps the mother had returned to claim her daughter, armed with proof against him. He must face the worst.

"Show her up," he managed to articulate. As the servant retired, he whispered hurriedly to Hugh:

"It is my wife; she must not see you here! We must not be seen together! Away with you!"

"But—"

"Begone, this instant; she may recognize you. We are in peril, I tell you."

He thrust his accomplice forcibly to the door.

Just then it was thrown wide open.

A lady entered, but it was not the full, majestic form of Mrs. Clermont. Hugh stopped as he saw this, and looked at her.

She threw up her veil, disclosing a face he instantly recognized, changed as it was by privation and suffering endured for long years.

It was a pallid, wasted face, that had once been beautiful. The dark eyes seemed more large and bright for the attenuation of the cheeks. The dark hair lay in masses over a pale, narrow forehead.

Marlitt waved Hugh to begone, as he placed a chair for his visitor. Hugh left the room.

"You may be surprised that I have taken this liberty, Mr. Marlitt," the lady began;

made to associate with blacklegs and ruffians."

"Much obliged for your good opinion, madam."

"I mean you no offense, sir; but my boy, you know, is the son of a gentleman," here the color swept over her pale face; "and, poor as we are, I have kept him from mingling with base people. I thought you might have a good will toward him for the sake of—of one who is gone; but you do not seem to think of that. You have some purpose in offering to take the lad."

"And should not be likely, if I had not, to make the offer, certainly."

"If you will tell me what it is, and I can approve of it—"

"I will tell you no more than that I have a fancy to adopt him. I have no son, you know, and my daughter yields me no filial obedience."

The poor woman wrung her hands in her distress.

"Do not ask me now," she pleaded. "You said you would come and see my husband."

"Very well. I will come to-morrow."

"And will you let me take him some brandy? The doctor ordered stimulants; and I have no money to buy wine."

Marlitt handed her the flask from the sideboard, on which her eyes were fixed; and gave her also a bottle of wine. Her sobs choked her thanks, as she stowed them under her shawl.

"And here is a trifle to buy some soup," and he put half a sovereign into her hand. "When I come to-morrow, you must be prepared to close the bargain."

As the woman, eager to return to her home, descended the stairs of the hotel, she was followed by a dusky figure, that kept in the shade as much as possible. She hurried along rapidly, taking the straightest course through several narrow streets.

Suddenly, in one of these, a man came up beside her.

She started back, with a loud scream.

"Hush, you fool!" growled Hugh Rawd, for it was he. "You do not know your old admirer, Hugh Rawd, then?"

"I do not mean to molest you, Mrs. Morell. Let me assist you to carry what you have under your shawl; and if you will take my arm, it will help you. The walking is slippery."

The woman was trembling violently. She made no answer, but quickened her pace.

"You need not be afraid of me, Emily. I was with Mr. Marlitt when you came in, and I could not help listening a little after the door was shut. I heard you say your husband was dying. You did not find Mr. Marlitt much disposed to be liberal, eh?"

"Mr. Rawd, I have no time to stop."

"I am going with you. If you will take my arm, we shall get on faster."

"But my husband can not see you!" cried the wife, terrified at the idea of a meeting between Albert, in his enfeebled state, and this reckless man.

"I do not intend to trouble him, my dear. Let him do his dying as fast as he can. But, Emily, listen to me. I can place you and your son in affluence. If you will marry me—"

"You have said all this before, Hugh, and I know what your promises mean."

"I can fulfill them now better than ever. Emily, I have in my breast-pocket—in my pocket-book—papers that can send that haughty Mrs. Clement back to beggary, and put you in possession of Broadhurst and the fortune."

Neither the villain nor the woman noticed a man well wrapped in a cloak, who had just come in view from the corner of another street. He stopped a moment as he heard the words uttered, then fell back into the shadow of the tall buildings.

Emily also stopped, and faced Hugh Rawd.

"If you speak truly," she said, "how wicked you have been to rob the widow and the orphan all these years!"

"I must do something for myself. I must live by my wits; I have nothing else. I would have put the estate into your hands years ago, if you would have married me. But you rejected me, and lost a fortune."

"I would not have gained it in that way!" murmured Emily, hurrying on her course.

"Thank you; but it is the only way to get it—to right yourself."

"I do not care for myself. I am past that."

"Your child, then?"

"Man, do not drive me to distraction. Only promise to marry me, Emily, and the property shall be yours."

"I do not believe you; I have never believed you."

"You have the best of reasons. I brought the license, remember."

"Let me go. I can not talk with you."

As she fled on, his steps kept pace with hers, and the dusky form was behind them.

"I will see you again, then. If your husband dies, Emily, you need not be poor. We can be rich and happy. Your son shall be the equal of any man in the kingdom."

She answered not, but hurried on.

"I will follow you till I see where you live, and call on you to-morrow."

She went on a few yards, then turned into Montague street, and sprung up the low steps of a mean-looking house, ringing the bell and then knocking.

The door was opened presently, and without looking back, she entered and closed it behind her. Hugh heard the drawing of a bolt.

A new way of mending his desperate fortunes had occurred to him. The husband was dying; so he had heard her say. Once rid of him, he could march on to wealth and a luxurious home with scarce an obstacle in his path.

As the prospect enlarged before him, he gave a low whistle of satisfaction. He would throw Marlitt overboard, after getting as much out of him as he could.

As a beginning, he would call upon Morell. So near death, as he understood he was, it would be an easy matter to make his death a fact. The man's life, in any event, compromised his safety.

He might blab of that job done on the coast. Yes; he must die.

Why should he hesitate at another crime, when so necessary to his advancement? Had not his leader in guilt said: self-preservation is the first law of nature?

He walked on fast as he reasoned thus to himself, and the future began to look rose-colored to his mental vision.

On a sudden he felt himself grasped by the arm forcibly. The street was very dark; there was a lamp at no great distance, but its feeble rays could not penetrate the gathering fog. He could only see that a tall and robust figure stood by his side.

He strove to throw off the assailant; but vainly; his other arm was seized and pinned as by an iron vice. At the same moment a voice hissed in his ear:

"Give up your pocket-book, and no harm shall come to you this time!"

A robber! Hugh had done not a little of such business, and he saw that this was a new hand. Thieves did not grapple with their victims in this way.

With a coarse laugh he bade the man let go his arms, or he would shout for help, and give him over to the police.

"You dare not call the police!" hissed the voice. "If you do, you will have the worst of it. I will give you over. I saw you pitch the girl in the water from Waterloo Bridge, on Tuesday night."

Hugh staggered back, horror-stricken. Who was this witness to his crime who knew him, and could give him up to justice?

He stammered out that he would deliver up his purse, as the price of freedom.

"I do not want your purse!" said the unknown. "Keep the wages of your crime. I must have the pocket-book from your breast-pocket."

Again the villain struggled violently to escape.

"Stand still! Do not dare cry out, or I give you up to justice at once! There is no mercy for you then."

One arm of his powerful enemy was thrown around him, holding Hugh's arms to his side, while his right wrist was forcibly grasped. Then the breast of his coat was torn open suddenly, and the full, large pocket-book dragged from the breast-pocket.

As he secured this, the assailant flung off his victim with such force that he was thrown on the ground at some distance.

He sprung to his feet in an instant, and rushed after the robber.

"Stay—stay!" he cried. "What you have will do you no good! There is no money in that pocket-book; only papers—papers of no value to any one else! You shall have money for them; give them back this instant!"

He seized the arm of his enemy, who turned, and confronted him, with a low laugh of defiance.

Both were close to the lamp, and as the man who had taken the pocket-book, turned, the red light fell upon his face. He pushed back his cap, so as fully to expose it.

Hugh let go his hold and recoiled in strange affright. His loss—the loss of all his fair prospects—was forgotten in what he saw.

"The dead—the dead come to life!" his white lips tried to articulate.

The man laughed again; then turned and strode away, disappearing in the darkness in an instant.

Faint with horror, the villain gazed after him. He leaned, almost helpless, against the lamp-post.

The face he had seen was that of the man whom he believed he had stabbed to death on that wild night, on the Welsh Coast! (To be continued—commenced in No. 105.)

Tracked to Death:

THE LAST SHOT.

BY CAPT. MAYNE REID, AUTHOR OF "HELPERS OF THE RANCHER," "SCALP HUNTERS," "WHITE CHIEF," ETC.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

"PHIL QUANTRELL."

THE spot where the two horsemen made halt, calls for some description, topographically.

The tree, spoken of by one of them as being an appointed rendezvous, was that under which they had dismounted. It was a grand live oak, with a trunk full fifteen feet in diameter, and branches spreading like a banner. Though of evergreen foliage, but little of the latter could be seen, even in daylight. Here and there, only some leaves on the extremity of twigs, that had penetrated through the dense masses of Spanish moss; this growing thickly upon its branches, and hanging in festoonery from its far-reaching horizontal limbs. Under the shimmering of the moonbeams the hoary parasite showed white and weird. At times its depending streamers, stirred by the night breeze, waved to and fro, like ghosts moving in a mist. When the air was still, they might have been mistaken for the waters of a cataract suspended in its fall, the spray suddenly converted into hoar frost and the jets into gigantic icicles. Centrally amid these huge trunk ascended; spreading wide as a wall, grim and corrugated as the skin of a crocodile. Fancy fifteen feet in diameter, without reckoning the outlying pilasters, which, following the direction of the roots, obliques off to nearly double the distance.

This hoary Titan of the forest stood fifty yards back from the river's bank, and about two hundred above the crossing. On all sides the bottom timber was dense; most of it also of large growth. Only for a space of a pole's breadth around the great oak was the ground clear; as if the other trees, deeming it their monarch, dared not intrude any nearer. From the ford below the spot could only be approached through thick bottom timber, itself shadowing a dense undergrowth of the saw-palmetto. A trace led to it from the main crossing-trail, so slight as to be scarcely perceptible, and so narrow that two horsemen could not travel it abreast.

The men in charge of the captive girls had ridden along it, one behind the other. Only after getting under the great oak had they come side by side. Then ensued the brief dialogue, which ended by their taking opposite sides of the tree, and dismounting, with its trunk between them.

They were now as much apart as if separated by a thick stone wall, and to communicate in speech it would have been necessary for them to shout at the highest pitch of their voices.

He who had shown reluctance to leave the river's edge remained on the side fronting toward the ford. After having disposed of his captive in the manner described, he stood beside his horse, bridle in hand.

For a time he kept this position, taking little notice of the form lying prostrate at his feet. He appeared to be a stern old sinner, among whose weaknesses woman was not one. Perhaps for this had he been selected to guard Jessie Armstrong; for it was Jessie he had charge of. Whatever might be the intent toward the captives, she was not meant for him; and he scarce seemed to think of her. His demeanor showed him more regardless of something else. With his face turned toward the ford,

he was listening for sounds to come from that direction—the plunging of horses' hoofs in the water. He listened impatiently, at intervals signifying his impatience by a blasphemous ejaculation.

Quite different was the behavior of his comrade, as also the scene being enacted on the other side of the tree. There lay Helen Armstrong, prostrate as she had been placed, still enveloped in the blanket, and confined with cords.

While the man guarding her was not erect, nor holding his horse by the bridle. He had thrown the rein over a piece of projecting bark, and was kneeling by her side, his head close to hers. In this attitude, he commenced pouring speech into her ear, that might well have driven her mad.

His first words:

"At length—at last I have you, sure and safe. Oh! it is sweet—sweet—sweet!"

That voice! Whose?

Helen Armstrong had no need to ask herself the question. Scarce knowing why, she had suspicion from the first that neither of the men in charge of them was an Indian. It was strengthened on hearing their horrid laugh; confirmed when, after crossing the stream, one of them spoke to the other, calling him "Phil." Notwithstanding her covered ears she had caught some words, intelligible, because in her own tongue. That one was sufficient—"Phil." On hearing it, there rushed into her remembrance a name spoken of in Natchitoches, while the sheriff's assistants were searching high and low for a murderer. It was the name, or, as she knew it, the *alias*, Phil Quantrell.

All uncertainty was now at an end. The man stooping over her was Phil Quantrell!

CHAPTER LXIX.

A RUFFIAN TRIUMPHANT.

AFTER a moment of silence, in which he appeared giving way to rapturous triumph, the ruffian again spoke; repeating the same words, with the addition of her name.

To his speech, exulting and passionate, she made no response. She was overwhelmed with a sense of utter helplessness. She well knew that any thing she might say would be of little avail—of none at all.

She had slightly started on recognizing the voice. It was less surprise than a mere spasmodic motion; such as may arise from treading upon a snake, or coming in contact with an assassin.

It was the thought of this that had startled her.

After it she was still again—so still, that her heart could be heard beating.

He who knelt beside her heard it; he knew it was throbbing in pain. This caused him no compassion—not the slightest touch of it. On the contrary, it seemed but to add to his exultation; for once again he repeated the words in a tone still more triumphant, ending with the self-pleased exclamation:

"Sweet! sweet! sweet!"

Not yet eliciting any rejoinder, he continued:

"Need I tell you who I am, Helen Armstrong? Though it's some time since we met, and a long way off, my voice, I take it, will be remembered. If not, a circumstance may recall our last interview. It was under a magnolia—a tree with a knot-hole that made a convenient letter-box for two lovers; one of whom is no longer alive, while the other is yourself. Now, my fair lady, do you know who's talking to you?"

No response from the prostrate form—not so much as a movement.

He tauntingly continued:

"Perhaps you'll recognize me by the sight, the sense said to be most reliable. You shall have an opportunity of trying. But, first, let me take you into a better light than this afforded by the fireflies."

Opening his arms, he threw them around the unresisting captive, and carried her out into the space illumined by the beams of the moon.

There he laid her down. Then, kneeling over her, as before, he tossed back the blanket, and encircled her waist, giving him the aspect of an Indian chief, and with a wet rag, dipped in the stream while crossing, he wiped the paint tattoo from his countenance. That done, he drew out a knife; cut open the *serape* by a transverse slit across the face of his captive, and pulled the severed edge back above her forehead.

The features thus uncovered, under the moonlight looked wan and sad. They resembled those of a beautiful nun, retired within the hood, making their beauty more plain. The dull thud of hoofs, still audible, told them that the Indians had turned up-stream. It was evident they were proceeding slowly.

Perhaps the savages had reached their journey's end, and were about to make encampment for the night. This appeared probable enough.

It became a certainty when the hoof-strokes were again suspended, and by other sounds they could tell that the plumed horsemen were dismounting.

Assured of this, the party in pursuit saw that they might make approach with more caution, taking their own time. Still, there was no need for any delay; and, as soon as they had got the bearings of the ground, they tightened their grasp upon their guns, and once more moved forward—this time determined to capture the game that had been baffling them.

The clear moonlight enabled them to discover the trace, leading off from the main trail, which they knew the two horsemen must have taken. There was no other way they could have gone.

But while searching for this they saw something that greatly increased their caution—causing them some alarm. The trail was covered with horse-tracks going toward the river—horses that must have passed recently.

That same day, said Clancy and Woodley, in a breath; perhaps that same night. And there had been at least a score of them. Unshod horses, too. It could not have been any party of Colonel Armstrong's colonists. Who then? Beyond doubt, a band of Indians!

So much the more reason for capturing the two they were after. As prisoners, they might be made to give information about the others that had gone across the stream. And it might be important. Possibly, these Indians were a hostile party, scheming some trouble for the new settlement.

"Let's take the two prisoners. That's the first thing to be done," was the counsel that came from Woodley.

Acting upon it, they kept along the narrow trace, now more cautiously than ever. Almost at every step they made pause; looking before them and listening.

After proceeding about two hundred yards, they came in sight of a spot where

intend taking you, we shall have a wedding. That's the right sort of place for a bridal such as ours should be. There the nuptial knot can be tied according to the laws of our own making—canons that neither Church sanctions nor the palaver of priests. I take it you understand me?"

The ruffian paused in his ribald speech. If he expected reply, he was disappointed. There was none—not a word.

Helen Armstrong, her form still prostrate and along the earth, appeared equally prostrate in soul. Enfolded in the Mexican blanket, that was close drawn around, her magnificent figure outlined underneath, she looked less like a living woman than one of Pharaoh's daughters taken from a tomb closed upon her thousands of years ago.

After Darke speaking she lay motionless as any mummy, and as silent. Even the beating of her heart could be no longer heard!

Had his words killed her? The shock of that terrible, taunting menace? Its horror seemed as one suddenly made senseless by a *coup d'clair* or a stroke of paralysis.

For a moment the scoundrel himself thought she might be dead. He fully understood the situation. He knew that what he had said must have produced an effect fearfully horrifying. He meant that it should, though he did not intend it to kill her. Had it done so?

He was bending closer to assure himself, when a sound struck upon his ear that caused him to spring suddenly erect, and stand like one just warned of an imminent danger.

For the moment he seemed to forget Helen Armstrong.

What he had heard, so affecting him, was the tread of a startled horse. But instantly after were other sounds; a cry of alarm; a confused struggle, as of men rushing to and fro; then speech, with names pronounced—among them that of a man he had need to fear and flee from. His robber comrade cried out on the other side of the tree:

"You, Sime Woodley! For God's sake don't kill me! Don't! don't!"

Darke waited to hear no more. With a bound he reached his horse, and jerked the bridle from the bark. Then hurrying back to his captive, the horse along with him, he grasped her roughly around the waist, raised her aloft, and flung her across the pommel of his saddle.

A spring took him into it, behind her.

But Helen Armstrong was no longer silent, or as if senseless. She, too, had heard Simeon Woodley's name, with the words that followed. She was now struggling and calling for help—help that seemed near at hand.

CHAPTER LXX.

NOT TOO LATE.

JUST as Simeon Woodley and the others had placed themselves in ambush, to take prisoners, as they supposed, a couple of Indians, accompanied by their squaws, the plashing in the water ceased, and the horses of the savages could be heard climbing out of the river channel. Their hoofs struck hard, as they scaled the sloping bank.

"We'll soon hear 'em hyar," whispered the backwoodsman.

In a moment more the tramping was suspended, and for some time remained so.

"They've stopped to fix their ridin' gear, I reckon," again whispered Woodley. "They needn't, for all o' the furrer they've got to go. Durnashun!"

As the hunter uttered this exclamation he sprung out upon the path. It came from his hearing the horses again in motion, and knowing by their tread they were not coming along the trail. They appeared to have left it, going another way.

"Durnashun!" he a second time exclaimed, and with more earnest emphasis, "whar are they off to? Sou'n's as if they war taking up the river bank. We'll hev to foller 'em. Kum on, fellers!—Keep close arter me. Look to your dog, Clancy. Don't let the animal g'it as much as a yirr, or we'll never get a glimpse o' them Indians agen. I'd 'a' bet my life on their comin' this way. But they hain't; the which o' it self looks w'arous. Durnashun!"

For the third time thus venting his disappointment, the backwoodsman glided off along the road in the direction of the river, the others following.

Before reaching the bank they all stopped and listened. The dull thud of hoofs, still audible, told them that the Indians had turned up-stream. It was evident they were proceeding slowly.

Perhaps the savages had reached their journey's end, and were about to make encampment for the night. This appeared probable enough.

It became a certainty when the hoof-strokes were again suspended, and by other sounds they could tell that the plumed horsemen were dismounting.

Assured of this, the party in pursuit saw that they might make approach with more caution, taking their own time. Still, there was no need for any delay; and, as soon as they had got the bearings of the ground, they tightened their grasp upon their guns, and once more moved forward—this time determined to capture the game that had been baffling them.

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But while searching for this they saw something that greatly increased their caution—causing them some alarm. The trail was covered with horse-tracks going toward the river—horses that must have passed recently.

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So much the more reason for capturing the two they were after. As prisoners, they might be made to give information about the others that had gone across the stream. And it might be important. Possibly, these Indians were a hostile party, scheming some trouble for the new settlement.

"Let's take the two prisoners. That's the first thing to be done," was the counsel that came from Woodley.

Acting upon it, they kept along the narrow trace, now more cautiously than ever. Almost at every step they made pause; looking before them and listening.

After proceeding about two hundred yards, they came in sight of a spot where

the timber showed open. They could tell this by the moonlight striking down to the earth. They saw that in the center of this opening stood a gigantic tree, whose branches, laden with Spanish moss, shadowed a large space of ground. Outside was a ring illumined by the light of the moon.

On the outer edge of this circle of light they had arrived. They stood crouching, looking across it, and scanning the shadowed space.

At first they could discern nothing, so perfectly opaque was the obscurity underneath the tree; more difficult for the eye to penetrate through the cross, slanting light of the moonbeams.

Fortunately there were fireflies, Nature's living lamps of the tropic night, that give cheer to the gloomiest recesses of a southern forest. A swarm of these insects, thick as bees, were flitting to and fro beneath the draped branches, with the sparkle of ball-room belles moving through the mazes of quadrille or cotillon.

Their united coruscation rendered luminous the shady space; but with a fitful, unsteady light. It was, however, steady enough for Simeon Woodley's eyes, as also those of Charles Clancy, to perceive under the great oak an object that formed no part of the forest—the figure of a man alongside that of a horse, both standing at rest. And, lying upon the ground, another form, not so easily determined, though apparently that of a woman.

As soon as Simeon Woodley had satisfied himself about the character of the group, he said, in whisper, to Clancy:

"One o' the two lots we see'd crossin' the river. Whar's the t'other, I wonder?"

Clancy made no reply. He, too, was conjecturing where the second savage and his squaw could be.

"Like enough on the furrer side o' the tree," suggested Woodley. "No matter 'bout that. Let's rush up, an' capter the one we see thar. The t'other ain't fur off. He in' now afoot, neytherkin escape us,—spec'ally wi' the squaws to bother 'em. Arter me, boys!"

As he spoke, the backwoodsman bounded forward, close followed by the rest. Across the moonlit space like shadows flitted the five human figures: that of a quadruped—the dog—among them.

Before the halted savage could make stir, or even change his attitude, they were around him—encircling himself, his horse, and the form at his feet.

And before he could utter a word of protest, Woodley had him by the throat. Clutching the collar of his buck-skin shirt, the hunter dragged him out into the moonlight, while Heywood took hold of the horse, Clancy stooping over the squaw.

Then there was a cry that startled all three, causing surprise more than alarm. It came from the man struggling in Woodley's arms, with the blade of a bow-knife gleaming before his eyes. It was a shriek of terror, followed by an appeal of piteous tone, in a tongue intelligible to all. The words were:

"You, Sime Woodley! For God's sake, don't kill me! Don't! don't!"

This was succeeded by an interval of silence, the interregnum that accompanies extreme astonishment.

Then the scared man continued: "Joe Harkness, too! Joe, you won't let them kill me? You know I wasn't the worst? I'm not to blame in this business. The Cap. made me do it, and him that's close by."

"Who? Where?"

stretching far beyond the moonlit circle—fancying himself carefully guarded, he at length made a bolt toward it.

In this fancy he was sadly, fatally mistaken. From the weak-willed Harkness he had nothing to fear. But it was different with Jupiter. In the white man counterfeited a red-skin the yellow man had recognized an old acquaintance—one who had given good reason to be remembered. The recognition was not mutual. For the former, better if it had been. It might have given him a longer lease of life; or, at least, some time for repentance. He could count on enough to need this. As it was, destiny had determined that his career—a wicked one—should come to an end. His hours, even their moments, were numbered.

He had got across the moonlit circle, and into the thick timber beyond. But he went no further. The runaway slave, lithe as a lynx, sprung after and soon overtook him.

Out of the dark shadow came back a cry, single and suddenly stifled—such as men utter when stabbed through the heart.

And soon after, the mulatto himself came out of that shadow, holding in his hand a long-bladed knife, its blade dripping blood.

Jessie Armstrong saw naught nor knew aught of this tragic scene, taking place, as it were, off the stage. As soon as released, she, too, had rushed to the other side of the tree, there rejoining her sister. Nor were Woodley, Heywood, or Clancy aware of it till some time after. Harkness alone had been witness not to the deed itself, but the proof of its having been done. He had evidence of this in the knife-blade held in the mulatto's hand, which, as he came back across the streak of moonlight, no longer glistened, its sheen being obscured by blood.

Woodley and Heywood, having settled things on the other side of the tree, saw they were no longer wanted there, and came round to look after him they had made captive, and were surprised at seeing only Harkness and the mulatto. Where was the sham savage?

"What hev you dud, Jupe?" asked Woodley, as the encircled knife came under his eyes. "Where's y'r pris'ner? Ye don't mean to say ye've killed him?"

Jupiter, holding out the blood-stained blade, said, in response:

"Master Woodley, I've done what you say, and what oughter been done long 'go. You know'd that man; so did I. He was once head nigger—driver for ole Eph Darke. If I show you my back, you'll see on it the scores of a cowhide, cut deep into the flesh. 'Twas him that did it."

Woodley, satisfied, remained silent. There was an interval of repose under the shadow of the live-oak, such as follows a terribly-tragic event—the calm after the storm.

Then succeeded speech—words of inquiry, mingled with other words, telling of mutual congratulation.

CHAPTER LXXII.

JOY.

To attempt painting the surprise of Helen Armstrong on finding that her lover still lived—seeing him beside her—would be like taking the photograph of a shooting star or a flash of lightning.

Equally difficult to depict her joy. It might be partly symbolized by that of one who, long lingering at the door of death, has health suddenly restored, with the prospect of a prolonged and happy life.

In hurried speech explanations passed between her and Clancy; with a renewal of vows plighted in the past, now sealed with kisses. Even the presence of Jessie, who had joined them, did not interfere with the rapturous exchange.

But another did—Simeon Woodley. While the lover was occupied with his restored sweetheart, the old hunter and Heywood had been cogitating between themselves. Taking their cue from what Harkness had long ago told them—coupling this with the horse-tracks seen going down to the ford—they had come to the conclusion that Borlase must have collected a large band of robbers, who were then operating on the opposite side of the river. Why Darke and the other had got separated from them, and were alone in charge of the captives, was not easily understood. The rescued girls could only tell what occurred to them—how they had been seized, blinded, and carried off, with what followed up to the moment of their rescue. They could say, however, that several had taken part in their seizure—Indians, as they supposed.

Their rescuers knew they were no Indians, but *prairie pirates*.

Where were these now?

No matter where. The backwoodsman knew there was danger in staying any longer under the live-oak. The fact that Darke had halted there pointed to it as a rendezvous. Woodley urged instant departure from the place.

"Charley Clancy," he said, interrupting a sweet *te-te-a-te*, "ye must get out o' hyar 'thout wastin' the shortest space o' time. This place ain't safe nohow."

Clancy started. Absorbed by sweeter thoughts, he had forgotten that there was danger still overhanging.

"You're right, Woodley," he rejoined. "But where ought we to go?"

"Straight on for the ole mishun. Fust, let's restore these dear critters to their father an' their friends. But we mustn't go by the dereck trail as leads to it—cross the river, hyar."

"Why not?"

"Bekase that mout be the consarndest, crookedest way yed ked travel, and the most dangerous, too. It air eydynt thar's a good grist o' these sham Injuns about somewhere. The sign show they're still on t'other side. By crossing hyar we mout meet 'em in the teeth; an' jess as we air now that we'dn't be to my likin', nor yours neither, Charley Clancy."

"What do you say we should do, Woodley?"

"Wal, I've been thinkin' 'bout it, me an' Heywood. I reck'n I've got a way that'll keep us clear o' encounterin' them. We needn't cross hyar at all. I know a trail that leads up this side the river to another fordin' place. It air about the ole mishun, an' will take us a good bit about—nigh on twenty mile. But it will be safe; I s'pose think perfectly safe. Wherever them wolves be now prowin', they ain't like to take the upper crossin'; an' tharfor that won't be no fear o' our droppin' inter thar jaws. I'm darnationed sorry Jupe's been so quick on the trigger an' killed that ugly cuss as tried to scape from us. Ef I hed him, w' my knuckles pressin' ag'in his thrapple,

I ked 'a' made him confess the hui thing. Only Ole Nick can draw any thin' out o' him now. For all that, I feel good as sure that Jim Borlase, 'compained by a goodish crowd, is on t'other side the San Saba; an' ef we go that way there'd be all sorts o' chance to drop inter their clutches, jest like a ripe apple from a tree. An' you, Charley Clancy, knows what that 'ud result in. The munchin' up o' them two critters, both on 'em sweet as pears and tender as persimmons at late fall-time."

Clancy, listening intently, needed no further argument to convince him. The thought of their encountering Borlase and his band—of Helen Armstrong being again at the mercy of these prairie-pirates, more inhuman than the savages themselves—caused him to give assent to the backwoodsman's proposal.

They must depart from the place, and quickly. So the thing was decided.

There was no reason why all should return to the bivouac they had so abruptly abandoned. They were upon the trail Woodley intended taking. It was only necessary to bring up their animals; and for these Heywood, Harkness and Jupiter went back, leaving Clancy to talk to Helen, while Woodley, in his homely way, did all he could to interest her sister.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 97.)

Esta's Message.

BY JENNIE DAVIS BURTON.

An April drizzle filled the air. The sidewalks were slippery, the crossings a terror to the few pedestrians obliged to be out in such forbidding weather.

Esta Weir glanced anxiously out, ever and anon. She had a bay-window to herself and the dainty willow work-basket where filmy crochets and flossy embroideries were heaped against the crimson lining. She was half-hidden by a falling curtain from the room where two or three chattering girls were grouped around Mrs. Thorlstadt's center-table, going into feminine ecstasies over the *melange* of fancy articles it upheld, all the work of their own fair fingers.

Carl Thorlstadt lounged against the mantelpiece, watching his girlish sister-in-law and her young friends with a smile, half-pitying and half-amused. Then his eyes wandered to the quiet figure in the window-seat, the flash of the tiny gold thimble and flying white fingers scarcely interrupted as she turned now and then to the prospect without. A gloom of impatience clouded Carl's face, and he twisted his long fair mustache with savage inconsiderateness.

He crossed the room with a couple of the swinging strides peculiar to his tempestuous moods. He just touched the bit of work with which her hands were occupied, as he asked:

"What is it?—a sacrifice, a tribute under compulsion, or a sham?"

She looked up wonderingly, not comprehending his sarcastic tone.

"Not necessarily one of the three," she answered, quietly.

"You tell me so? Yet you have spent days over these fol-de-rols"—with a contemptuous look at the basket—"after declining to take a part in the musical entertainment, though you said you would have enjoyed it dearly could you find the time for preparation. You have given double the needful time to this—is it not then a sacrifice? Perhaps you yielded to the arbitrary law which general custom has established; would not that be giving on compulsion? Or do you only lend your aid to keep up the glittering sham of public charity? It is fashionable, you know, and gains more credit than by following the ancient precept which teaches that the left hand shall not know what the right hand doeth. Oh, display, ostentation and hypocrisy! how I weary of having them flaunted in my face at every turn!"

"Then I suppose you will take no part in the charity," she said, quietly ignoring the accusations with which he had charged her.

"I have not intimated that. I don't even defend my own apparent inconsistency; I shall most probably attend the fair, share in the jam, and bear away my allotment of trumpery. Give me credit for frankness, but none for selfish virtues."

Her clear eyes turned upon him reproachfully.

"Alas for the rarity of Christian charity."

she murmured. Carl heard her as he drummed upon the plate-glass window, and his lip curled sneeringly.

"Esta, have you finished?" called Mrs. Thorlstadt from the opposite end of the room. "Our packages are all made up, and Patsy is waiting to take them to the vestry. I would have gone myself, but for this miserable drizzle."

"I shall go with mine, notwithstanding. I promised Mrs. Morrison that I would call on the way."

"Must you go, Esta?" Mrs. Thorlstadt's face was troubled. "The streets are running with wet."

"I am not soluble," laughed Esta, as she folded up her completed work.

Carl faced around suddenly.

"You don't mean that you are actually going out?"

She nodded unconcernedly.

"Take me as a substitute. I'll promise to perform your errand faithfully."

She laughed outright.

"My lady patroness might object, Mr. Thorlstadt. I must decline your kindness, with thanks."

He bowed very stiffly, and stalked out under the frescoed arch which protected the portal. Carl Thorlstadt had set up a ridiculously perfect ideal of the woman he should some day love, and he was chafing now that he could not reconcile it with Esta Weir.

He was waiting on the steps, an umbrella in hand, when she came out a little later.

"At least you will not refuse my escort," he said, extending his hand for her bundle.

A flush surged over her face and she hesitated, but only for an instant.

"I shall take a car," said she. "Don't trouble yourself, pray."

But he did trouble himself in a hurry, and none too soon at that. She slipped upon the damp, polished steps, and would have fallen headlong but for his outstretched arms. He made no attempt to take advantage of the *contretemps* and would have turned away when he placed her on her feet again, but she put forth a detaining hand which trembled slightly.

"I think I have sprained my ankle. Will you give me your arm back into the house?"

Without a word he took her up bodily and carried her back into the room they had left.

"Can I be of service to you now?" he asked, before giving place to the girls who crowded around.

"No more; but I fear that Patsy must take a second trip."

Carl turned away abruptly.

"Sheer perversity!" he muttered. "Any thing rather than accept a favor from me."

The sprain was a slight one, but sufficient to keep Esta within doors for a day or two. Carl studiously avoided her proximity, but haunted the house, unable to tear himself wholly out of her way. The good little sister-in-law, who had her own notions regarding the case, laid forcible hold of him one night when the girls were all out of the way, busy at the charity fair.

"Why don't you make a clean breast of it and have the agony over, poor fellow?" she asked, laughingly.

"I—why—what? I'm a veritable donkey, sister Lu; there, that's the truth."

"You're a fine fellow, Carl, and I'm sure Esta thinks so; the diabolical, of course, she's not going to throw her opinion at your head."

Carl began to pace the floor, much perturbed.

"You know it all, Lu; now tell me what am I to do? Esta is like all the rest, frivolous, inconsistent, hypocritical; would I be happy with a woman like that, do you think?"

"You deserve to be unhappy without her," cried Lu, vexedly. "Esta is the purest, truest girl you will ever come across. Think of her, scarcely out of her childhood even now, yet for three years she has supported herself and an older sister, who is too much of a fine lady to put her hands to work. That burden is about off her shoulders, thank goodness! as Alicia has been sure of her market at last. You've no idea how Esta pinched herself, and worked almost night and day for that selfish elder sister. Why, I could only persuade her to come here for a couple of weeks by holding out the inducement of steady employment all the while."

"She works?" ejaculated Carl. "You don't mean to say—"

"I do, indeed," interrupted Lu. "All that embroidery, crocheting and tatting, that I've seen you scowl at, is nothing else than her daily bread; she does it to order, you see, and is well paid for it, too. She got up an hour earlier mornings to knit an afghan for the fair; said she couldn't feel justified to do any thing more for it, and I should think not, poor dear! I dare say you thought it was all a pretense of being busy, but let me tell you that Esta is a jewel among women."

The following day was Sunday, and some festive occasion in the calendar of the Saints. Carl roused himself in the gray blank of the early morning. The streets were full of early worshippers, and the great cathedral, with its clear, soft lights and imposing ceremonies, was thronged when he reached there. He waited in the porch while the multitude poured out, until he was side by side with the slight form he had been watching for. He knew Esta's passion for the grand music of the Holy Church, and was not mistaken in supposing he would find her there.

He drew her hand within his arm almost before she had seen him.

"You look inspired," he said, as they were carried along by the throng. "What message came to you?"

"Peace on earth and good will among men. Love, infinite and all-powerful, high as Heaven and broad as unlimited space."

"Will you take the gift of it from me, Esta? I have no words to plead except—I love you."

They were enough, however, and all misunderstandings were swept away between them in the breaking dawn of the bright April morning.

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love, and again he was laughed at, and told that he must not mistake a woman's coquetry for love.

That night Lionel Harmon left the house of his boyhood, and a deep gloom fell upon the household.

Then it was that Ione Vivian felt the sin of her act toward the proud youth, whom she dearly loved; but, too late—he had gone, perhaps forever.

Months passed, and months made years, and yet no word from the voluntary exile, who had given up home and kindred for love of a woman.

Eugene Harmon had loved, and loving, had sought the hand of Ione; but she bade him wait, and three years went by ere she gave him her promise to be his wife.

It was a quiet wedding, there in the old ivy-grown castle, for General Harmon wished it so.

Never had he ceased to mourn his absent son, and while he knew not his fate, the father would not that the halls should resound with gayety.

Eugene Harmon had become a changed man, through his love for his beautiful wife; and Ione had drunk deep of the cup of bitterness, and a wiser and sadder woman, tried to do her duty toward her husband.

At length a fair little baby-face smiled upon the mother, and in the care of her infant daughter, Mrs. Harmon was happy, and the following years were tinged with pleasure.

A long time had gone by; the little Ione had reached her tenth year, and age was rapidly telling upon the old General, but still he lived on, longing and hoping that his absent son would return.

All were sleeping in the castle; the distant village spire had murmured the hour of midnight, when a bright red flame flashed through the library window; a moment more, and leaping tongues of fire licked the walls of the old mansion, and their loud and angry roar roused the inmates.

In haste General Harmon, his brother and his wife, and the servants all escaped, but yet one was missing. Roused from her sleep, the child Ione had wandered in fright down the long hallway, and the frantic parents could nowhere find her.

In a frenzy of distress they stood in the garden, surrounded by a group of frightened servants, and gazed upon the roaring flames, while General Harmon, overcome with grief, was the picture of despair.

Suddenly a tall form dashed up, and inquired of a servant:

"Did you say there was some one yet in the building?"

"Yes, sir; little Ione, Mrs. Harmon's only child."

With a bound the stranger started toward the burning castle; heedless of the warning cries of all, he darted into the fiery furnace, and disappeared.

Five, ten minutes passed, and in breathless suspense the spectators stood gazing upon the scene.

Then, in a distant window, appeared the stranger's form, and joy inexpressible, he bore in his arms the little Ione.

A cry of joy, a shout of exultation, went up from all, and the grief-stricken parents sunk down in thankfulness to God for the safety of their darling.

But an instant the stranger stood thus, and then beckoned to the servants to approach. Enveloping the fragile form in blankets and soft quilts, he dropped her from the window into the upraised arms of those below, and then disappeared from sight, but not for long.

A few moments more, he tottered from the door, enveloped in flames, and fell upon the greensward of the lawn.

Quickly were the flames subdued, and the suffering man carried to a farm-house near, and there Eugene Harmon and his wife endeavored to bring back to life the one who had risked himself to save Ione.

"Where am I?" asked the sufferer, for there was no sight in the seared eyes.

"Here, with those who will care for you. Is there any one you would send for?"

"No! Methought I knew that voice."

"Can I do anything for you? tell me who you are, that I may send for your friends," again said the soft voice of Ione Harmon.

"I am he who was once the victim of a coquette, Lionel Harmon!"

"Ah! God have mercy upon me!" and Ione Harmon fell fainting into the arms of her husband.

Long weeks passed by ere Lionel Harmon was able to leave his sick bed, his rack of torture; but in those weeks his father had securely left his side.

There, also, day and night, had hovered Ione, the woman who had so cruelly deceived him; and the little Ione, the darling whose life he had saved, was ever near to comfort and cheer him.

A blind, disfigured man, he passes his days wandering about the grounds of the castle, for a new mansion has risen where the old one stood; and in having saved the child of the woman who cast aside his love, he feels that he has been revenged; and is content to let the dead past bury its dead.

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MY GIFT.

BY JOE JOT, JR.

Heaven bless her little generous heart!
There's none so kind as she;
Truly, I think her only thought
Is to be good to me.
And show in kindly words and acts
What words can never tell;
We've known each other scarce a month,
And yet, she loves me well.

See what she sends me to-day,
Wrought by her own fair hands—
A mitten which is just my size,
And made of colored strands!
Dear little soul, her kindly haste
Her zeal has overruled,
For, while she thought that she sent two,
She sent me only one!

Bless her dear heart, how blank she'll feel
When'er she finds this gift will steal—
The tears into her eyes will steal—
Indeed, I have no doubt,
She'll never quite forgive herself
Her carelessness today—
But I shall cheer her up and kiss
Her gentle tears away.

You fellows smile and slyly wink;
You're envious, I'll bet;
You'd be too glad if such a gift
From such fair hands you'd get.
I would not yield it for a crown;
I'll keep it till I die.
To kiss it every day, and think
How fortunate am I!

Little Suriya.

BY LAUNCE POYNT

NO. II.

THE sun was high in the heavens, on the day after that when Don Manuel Almanza had rescued little Suriya from the brutality of Zadok, the beast-tamer. The ambassador was a bold man, and somewhat rash. He had gone out for a boar-hunt, and in the ardor of the chase had lost all his hunters and companions; so that he found himself, at mid-day, alone at the edge of a vast jungle, standing by his exhausted horse, above the carcass of a huge wild boar.

Almanza was unarmed, save for a spear; and for the first time it occurred to him that he might be in danger, ere he returned, from some of the numerous wild beasts that lay between him and the city in the jungle. Where he was, he could not tell, for the chase had completely turned him round, but he knew that the sun was in the south, and the city in the west; wherefore he concluded that he must either cross the jungle, or skirt it till he came to an open space. The natural impetuosity of his nature dictated the former course, and the reckless cavalier plunged into the jungle, by a sort of narrow path that was formed by the passage of wild beasts, for many centuries. It had one merit. It led in the right direction. Little did he know whose path it was.

Before Don Manuel entered the jungle, he cut off the scalp of the old boar as a trophy, and put it in his saddle-holsters, and then proceeded leisurely along, careless of the dangers he was ignorantly confronting.

The jungle was still as death, and the air seemed to quiver with heat. Not even the hum of an insect disturbed the silence of high noon, and the only living creatures he saw were a few gayly-mottled serpents, lying coiled in the open spaces, basking in the sun. The cavalier passed them unharmed, the sleepy influence of the day seeming to have quelled their malignity. One or two lifted their heads, and hissed languidly at him, but a quick, dextrous slash of the razor-like boar-spear, the head of which was flat and shaped like a laurel-leaf, cut the nearest one all to pieces, before it could spring; and Almanza passed on, deeper and deeper, into the jungle.

He walked slowly along the path, leading his tired and foam-covered horse, and the further he went, the wilder became the scenery, till at last the path abruptly ended in an open patch of *sarput* grass, mingled with close patches of jungle, lying like islands in the long yellow grass, which was all fallen over from its own weight.

This character of country was particularly perplexing to the wanderer, trying to find his way. Each jungle island looked just like the rest, and there was no path to guide one. The Portuguese cavalier stopped for a few moments to determine his true course, and then struck boldly out over the puzzling country, still leading his horse.

He had not gone very far, when he heard the hum of insects once more. It seemed to come from but a short distance off, behind one of the jungle islands. Almanza proceeded toward it, as it lay on his way, and became convinced that it must be the noise of flies above some carcass. But before he could see it plainly, he became sensible that his horse was acting strangely, and also of a peculiar odor, not by any means that of a decaying body.

It was a strong, musky odor, peculiar and sickening. It seemed to affect the horse strangely, for the creature backed on the bridge, and kept its glaring eyes riveted on the jungle island, behind which the buzz of insects was audible, snorting with every symptom of terror.

Almanza knew what it was in a moment. It was the scent of a tiger. Brave as he was, he was yet not fool enough to stay where he was, with no better arms than a boar-spear. He hastened to mount his horse, but the animal backed away from him in terror, snorting and trampling, and making a great noise.

Almanza knew his danger now. He judged the tiger to be asleep by the remains of a half-devoured carcass, but he knew that the slumber would not last long. Nor did it. In a moment, as it seemed, he heard an angry roar, and a huge tiger charged out of the bushes, furious at the invasion of its kingdom, and flew at the cavalier.

It was now that Almanza's presence of mind stood him in good stead. He managed to keep his horse between him and the tiger, by a desperate effort, and the next minute the charger was borne to the earth by the enraged animal, while Almanza leaped back with presented spear, and was enabled to retreat slowly, the tiger seeming contented with one prey, as long as it was undisturbed at that. Almanza slowly backed away out of distance, his eyes riveted on the tiger. At first he noticed nothing particular in the creature, but after a little, as he got out of danger, he uttered a low exclamation of wonder.

The tiger had a broad collar on its neck! "It is Suriya's tiger!" he murmured to himself. "The man expected me to get this creature back."

It was indeed the truant Kuzbash, who,

having had one meal, was now making another, with great relish, on the unfortunate horse, growling at the cavalier, who slowly fell back. Almanza made the best of his way westward, toward Goa, which he found was not far off. The very next rise he surmounted brought him in sight of its domes, but also in sight of something else that stirred his blood still more. It was the slight, graceful form of little Suriya coming up the swell toward him, all alone.

Almanza halted, and the girl approached him. She exhibited no surprise, but seemed oppressed with some secret grief. "Where goest thou, Suriya?" demanded the cavalier, hurriedly. "No further this way, for Heaven's sake. A tiger has just attacked me, and slain my horse. 'Twas God's mercy I escaped!"

Suriya started, and clasped her hands. "Oh! tell me, my lord, was it Kuzbash?" He had a collar on, my lord, and I dare not go back without him. He is the only creature that I can control, for I brought him up from a cub. The rest are only kept under by the whip. Zadok has threatened to let them all out, if I come back without Kuzbash. He says, since he can not strike me, they shall do it, and he will proclaim it an accident. Oh! my lord, was it a wild tiger, or Kuzbash, that you saw?"

"It was Kuzbash," he answered. "But, remember, he has tasted blood. You can not go nigh him safely."

"Oh! yes, I can, my lord. Kuzbash knows me well. He was angry with Zadok last night, and broke from me to attack him. Zadok kept him off, till he could lock himself in, but then Kuzbash fled to the jungle, and Zadok beat me, as you saw. I must go, indeed, my lord."

"Then I go with thee," said Almanza, firmly, and the two started on their perilous errand after the truant tiger.

It was easy enough to find him. Kuzbash was enjoying his meal upon horseflesh with great satisfaction, and so far filled, that he regarded them as they came up without any particular menace, beyond a low grumble at Almanza.

"Let him eat," said Suriya, softly. "He will come to me when I call him, presently." And so it proved. The girl held out her

hand, and called the tiger, when it had

stopped eating and looked lazily round.

The glutton animal came quietly up, and rubbed against its mistress, who petted and fondled it; and it even allowed the Portuguese cavalier to lay his hand on its head.

Then the strange trio took their way back to the city.

At evening of that day, Zadok came home, sullen and ferocious as usual. His savage temper was further inflamed by drink, for Zadok was no Moslem. He entered the desolate hut, and the first person he saw was little Suriya, seated on a chair, in front of the heap of mats that formed her couch. He glanced round the room. Kuzbash was nowhere to be seen. The tiger's empty chain hung from the staple where it was usually fastened.

Zadok grinned as bad as one of his own tigers.

"So, fool!" he said, in a low, grating tone. "I warned thee not to come back without my tiger. Thy blood be on thine own head."

"Where are you going, Zadok?" she asked, as the beast-tamer made a step toward the back-yard.

"To let out *Burrhea*," he answered. "The beast's hungry. You'll make him a meal."

"Zadok," said the girl, firmly, "be warned! My lord told me last night to protect myself, if you tried to harm me."

"Protect thyself, then," he said, sneeringly, as he opened the door.

"I will," she said, suddenly starting up. "At him, Kuzbash!"

There was a fearful roar, answered from every cage in the yard, as Kuzbash leaped forth from the coverlets that had hitherto concealed him. Zadok uttered a yell of terror and sprung toward where his whip hung.

But, before he could reach it, Kuzbash had avenged himself and his mistress. With one blow of his heavy paw he stretched Zadok dead on the floor, just as the Portuguese ambassador, with a crowd of guards, headed by the Maharajah himself, appeared at the doorway from the back-yard, where they had been in waiting.

"So dies a traitor," said the Maharajah, calmly. "Suriya, our police have discovered thy parentage. Thou art our own daughter, stolen while an infant by yonder villain, when the nurse was slain by one of his tigers. We have found the proofs, hidden in his money-chest. Bless thee, my daughter."

Suriya said nothing to her father, but glanced timidly at Almanza.

"My lord," she said, "this is thy doing." And Almanza smiled.

THOMAS WALKER'S tomahawk and powder-horn have been found in Kentucky. Walker was Boone's predecessor on the "bloody ground."

Camp-Fire Yarns.

"Old John's" Story.

BY RALPH RINGWOOD.

We left San Antonio at daylight, and striking the great Western road leading toward the Mexican border, pushed ahead rapidly, determined to make the most of it while our cattle were fresh.

We were bent upon a mission of much importance to the outlying settlements, and as time was, as I have intimated, of the greatest importance, we did not draw rein for camp until a late hour in the night.

The place selected was an isolated clump of live-oak hard by a little stream of water, with plenty of grass. A little southward of the timber there rose from the level bosom of the prairie one of those singular natural formations, sometimes, but very rarely, met with in these regions. A large boulder, rugged and perfectly bare of all verdure, around whose base had sprung up, for a distance of twenty feet in every direction, quite a thicket of mesquit bushes.

"I have good reason to remember this spot," said Old John, as we lay out on the grass in the open after "supper."

"Well, damn me if I don't believe yer remembers somethin' about every place this side uv the Rockies," said an old ranger.

"Yes, Ben, I do know a good many places," replied Old John, after the laugh had subsided. "But, this one in particular, maybe because there was a pretty woman connected with the adventure."

"A gal, eh? I see!" said Ben, facing around.

"Yes; and as pretty and brave a gal, too, as you'd want to see. But I'll tell you, if you all like, how it was."

It was during our war with the Greasers, and just before the affair at the Alamo, when night overtook me, some ten or fifteen miles off yonder to the north.

"Travis had sent word that he wanted reinforcements at San Antonio, and the Old Man had sent me down to tell him to hold

"But that wasn't all. Dark as it was I could see that the woman's dress was such as is only worn by the very highest class among the Mexicans, and that she wore no covering on her head, just as though she had stepped out of the house for an evening walk."

"At that time there were several large haciendas, owned by rich old dons somewhere between that and the Rio Grande, but I knew there was none within a day's journey of where we were."

"But I wasn't long in ignorance. The voice of the woman, who was speaking, was excited and clearly showed anger. She was upbraiding the—"

"Doin' what?" suddenly asked Old Ben.

"Raising a devil of a row with the fellow, abusing him and the like, and pretty soon I learned the reason of it."

It seemed that the Greaser was her cousin, and head over ears in love with her, while she liked somebody else better, and was about to marry him; but he blocked the game by carrying her off that day and bringing her out here to make her come to terms."

"He was an officer in the service, and his men were there down by yonder rock, sitting in their saddles, waiting the movements of their commander."

"This much I learned from their talk, and from the very first I had made up my mind that I'd block his game."

"Sartin!" grunted Ben, who was the privileged speaker.

"The Mexican girl was game, and the way she pitched into the Greaser was a caution, but the fellow only laughed at her, and finally got mad himself."

"I saw things were coming to a focus—" "Oh, damn it, cap'n, talk so's a feller kin understand 'you'!" again interrupted Ben, petulantly.

"To a point, to a head, Ben," said Old John, good-naturedly, "and so I got ready to play my little game."

"All at once the Greaser seized the girl by the wrists, at which she uttered a loud scream and struggled to break away, while at the same moment I sprang up right in front of them, and, before the fellow knew whether I was a ghost or what, I let him

"have it square between the eyes, and I think, turned him about a complete somersault."

"Served the skunk right!" exclaimed the old ranger.

"For a minute the girl stood staring at me, not knowing whether to run or stay, but, on my speaking to her in English, she instantly approached and gave me her hand."

"I knew there was no time to be lost, for I thought I heard a movement down where the Indians were; so, seizing the girl by the arm, I hurried her off to where my mustang was, and started to lift her into the saddle, intending to slip off, if possible, in the darkness."

"But I was not to get away so easily. The blow I had dealt the Mexican was a hard one, but not enough to kill, and the consequence was that he rapidly recovered, and, hearing our movements, hastily discharged his pistol in that direction."

"That, of course, was the signal of alarm, and instantly following the shot, I heard the rapid hoof-strokes of the cavalry charging our covert."

"We had both thought that the Mexican's fall had gone wide, but you can imagine my dismay when, on making a second effort to seat the girl in the saddle, I saw the mustang sink, first upon his knees, and then, with a groan, roll over on his side, stone dead."

"The scoundrel had done us more harm than he thought for."

"Without pausing to examine further, I again dashed off through the undergrowth, holding the girl's hand in my own, and finally came out into the open upon the northern side of the clump."

"I knew they would surround the timber, and saw the necessity of getting outside their line."

"This we managed to do by running close to the earth, and having reached a point some two hundred yards distant, we paused to watch events."

"We could see shadow forms dashing back and forth through the gloom, and once or twice heard rapid commands issued, but this was all."

"See! see!" suddenly exclaimed the girl. "Yonder! Do you not distinguish the form of a white horse close beside the darker figure?" She spoke in a whisper, and in Spanish.

"I looked in the direction, and saw plainly the object indicated."

"That is Marco, my horse! If he could but hear my voice!"

"Can you risk calling him?" I asked, eagerly.

"The trooper holds his bridle. He may not be able to break away," she replied, doubtfully.

"We must risk it. We can not clear this prairie by daylight, and then our capture is certain," I said.

"If he only hears me! Marco! Marco!"

she suddenly called, her voice rising full and clear on the still night air.

"For a moment a profound silence followed the call, and then a sudden commotion, a loud, shrill neigh, a shout, and, like a flash of light, the white steed bore down to where he had heard the well-known voice."

"Even before the Mexicans knew what was up, the horse was at our side, and, in another moment, I was in the saddle, with the young girl seated safely behind me."

"That closed the exciting part of the adventure, for there was no horse in the Mexican troop that could overtake the white, even at a canter."

"We made for San Antonio, where I delivered my charge into safer hands to be returned home; managed to see Travis and deliver the old man's message, and then, with the white horse between my thighs, a present from the senora, I put back to rejoin the army."

"So, you see, boys, I have good reason to remember this place."

"Dang my ole leathers of yur haint!" said Ben.

Short Stories from History.

Indian Ingenuity.—Mr. Hearne, in his journey from Hudson's Bay to the Northern Ocean, quotes a narrative of the adventures of a poor Indian woman that his party met with in the course of their route. One day in January, when they were hunting, they saw the track of a strange snow-shoe, which they followed; and at a considerable distance came to a little hut, where they discovered a young woman sitting alone. As they found that she understood their language they carried her with them to their tents. On examination she proved to be one of the Western Dog-ribbed Indians who had been taken prisoner by the Athapscow Indians, in the summer of 1770; and in the following summer, when the Indians that took her prisoner were near this part, she had escaped from them with an intent to return to her own country; but the distance being so great, and having after she was taken prisoner, been carried in a canoe the whole way, the turnings and windings of the rivers and lakes were so numerous that she forgot the track; so she built the hut in which she was found to protect her from the weather during the winter, and here she had resided from the first setting in of the fall.

From her account of the moose pas, since her escape, it appeared that she had been near seven months without seeing a human face; during all which time she had supported herself very well by snaring partridges, rabbits and squirrels; she had also killed two or three beavers and some porcupines. That she did not seem to have been in want is evident, as she had a small stock of provisions by her when she was discovered; and was in good health and condition, and one of the finest Indian women in North America.

The methods practiced by this poor creature to procure a livelihood were truly admirable, and are great proofs that necessity is the real mother of invention. When the few deer-skins that she had an opportunity of taking with her were all expended in making snares, and sewing her clothing, she had nothing to supply their place, but the sinews of the rabbits' legs and feet; these she twisted together for that purpose with great dexterity and success. The animals which she caught in those snares not only furnished her with a comfortable subsistence, but of the skins she made a suit of neat and warm clothing for the winter. It is scarcely possible to conceive that a person in her forlorn situation could be so composed as to be capable of contriving or executing any thing that was not absolutely necessary to her existence; but there were sufficient proofs that she had extended her care much further, as all her clothing, besides being calculated for real service, showed great taste, and exhibited no little variety of ornament.

Her leisure hours from hunting had been employed in twisting the inner rind or bark of willows into small lines, like net-twine, of which she had some hundred fathoms by her; with this she intended to make a fishing-net as soon as the spring advanced. It is of the inner bark of willows, twisted in this manner, that the Dog-ribbed Indians make their fishing-nets, and they are much preferable to those made by the Northern Indians.

Five or six inches of an iron hoop made into a knife, and the shank of an arrow-head of iron, which served her as an awl, were all the metals the poor woman had with her when she eloped; and with these implements she had made herself complete snow-shoes, and several other useful articles.

Her method of making a fire was equally singular and curious, having no other materials for that purpose than two hard sulphureous stones. These, by long friction and hard knocking, produced a few sparks, which, at length, communicated to some touchwood; but, as this method was attended with great trouble, and not always with success, she did not suffer her fire to go out all the winter.

The singularity of the circumstance, the comeliness of her person, and her approved accomplishments, occasioned a strong contest between several of the Indians of the party, who should have her for a wife; and the poor girl was actually won and lost at wrestling, by near half a score different men the same evening.

When the Athapscow Indians took this Indian woman prisoner, they, according to the universal custom of those savages, surprised her and her party in the night, and killed every soul in the tent, except herself and three other young women. Among those whom they killed, were her father, mother and husband. Her young child, four or five months old, she concealed in a bundle of clothing, and took it with her, undiscovered, in the night; but when she arrived at the place where the Athapscow Indians had left their wives (which was not far distant), they began to examine her bundle, and finding the child, one of the women took it from her, and killed it on the spot.

This last piece of barbarity gave her such a disgust to those Indians that, notwithstanding the man who took care of her treated her in every respect as his wife, and was, she said, remarkably kind to, and even fond of her, so far was she from being able to reconcile herself to any of the tribe that she rather chose to expose herself to misery and want, than live in ease and affluence among persons who had so cruelly murdered her infant.



LITTLE SURIYA